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INTRO

Constant Capture

Jon McKenzie & Lane Hall

The tension between security and liberty has a long history, but it has come to the fore in new ways in the wake of the September 11th attacks in America and amidst the ongoing "global war on terror," a war launched by the United States but also drawing in many other states, even if they only use it as cover for their own internal repression and violence. Individuals from around the world have been subjected to "extraordinary rendition," whereby they are illegally abducted, detained, and flown by US operatives to far-flung "black sites" for interrogation and torture. Such renditions have sometimes involved European democratic governments, leaving one to wonder which is worse: whether elected officials knew of these operations or whether they did not, in which case their security agencies acted on their own.

The heightened and increasingly high-tech tension between security and liberty has arguably come to define the early 21st century world, where security cameras, satellite imaging, datamining systems, and other technologies create a global surveillance network seemingly capable of constantly capturing one's every move and transaction—hence the name of this issue, *Constant Capture*. How can one be free in a world of constant capture, a world where the incessant capture of one's image or data may lead to the capture of one's body and identity? Not surprisingly, artists and activists have responded to this situation by both confronting and miming the visual practices associated with contemporary security, incorporating surveillance video and computer technologies into protests and public information campaigns, theater and performance art, visual art and installation. Similarly, scholars have sought to document and analyze both emerging security measures and the creative and critical responses to them. This issue of *Frakcija* explores the role that visual media and imaging technologies play in two interrelated areas: the policies and techniques of global, national, and corporate security, on the one hand, and on the other, the struggle for civil liberties around the world. In particular, this issue focuses on select ways that visual practices have been used both by nation states and corporations for security and control purposes and by artists and activists seeking to expose, counter, and in some instances, even embrace and divert such measures. Contemporary practices have a history and thus, in addition to essays and projects dealing with current developments, we have also included a number of texts examining works and events from the mid-20th century.

The issue's five sections present different perspectives on the condition of constant capture. "Living with Big Brother" sets the stage by offering three sets of materials. Performance scholar John E. McGrath's essay, "I Love the Smell of Data in the Morning," takes on the apocalyptic critiques of surveillance society by contending that the surveillance space actually contains multiple and conflicting desires. The next piece features images from "SUPER VISION," a large-scale, cross-media performance by the performance group The Builders Association and the multidisciplinary collective dbox; the performance examines three scenarios of dataveillance in everyday life. Finally, sociologist A. Aneesh's "Specters of Global Communication" examines Indian call centers, where cross-cultural training and data profiling produce a disjointed, *postsocial* reality populated by specters of workers.

The second section, "Data Interventions," explores the concrete experience of post-9/11 security measures. James Der Derian's "29 Palms: A Photo Essay" documents the use of Iraqi simulacrum at a US military training site in southern California. In "Points of Departure: The Culture of US Airport Screening," Lisa Parks analyzes the airport checkpoint, a high-tech yet labor intensive space that she contends constitutes a key site for emerging forms of biopolitical power based on national security rather than national defense. Taking flight from his own experience at airport checkpoints and FBI interviews, artist Hasan Elahi provides the background story to his acclaimed online project, "Tracking Transience." Intervening in Hasan's story, communications scholar Sandra Braman provides a series of comments from the perspective of US media law and policy.

"Taking Liberties" focuses on the relation of art, politics, and institutions. In "Something's Missing," art historian Melanie Mariño analyzes the utopian aspects—the "no space"—found in the work of Santiago Sierra, arguing that what has been evacuated by this provocative artist may be art's political efficacy. Literary and cultural theorist Caroline Levine's essay, "Propaganda for Democracy," examines the strange "logic of the avant garde," whose very opposition to mainstream institutions makes them perfect material for democratic propaganda during times of war. And in "The Right to Representation," historian Jasmine Alinder focuses on the work of Toyo Miyatake, who resisted incarceration by taking photographs while held in a Japanese American internment camp during the Second World War.

In "Staging Torture," we present three works operating at the intersection of performance and torture. Poet and scholar Ruxandra Cesereanu explores the gruesome use of theatrical tableaus in the Romanian gulag, where guards routinely "reeducated" prisoners by casting them into religious and allegorical scenes of torture which they then enacted. In "On *Caging, Terror and Flesh*," Jon McKenzie interviews the Syrian-Australian artist Fassih Keiso about a 2005 performance work in which he solicited volunteers in order to explore the humiliation of bodies at Abu Ghraib. Marin Blažević's essay, "Actor/Spectator Between Oppression and Expression," examines the capture and manipulation of audiences by two leading forces in Croatian performing arts, theater director Branko Brezovec and the performance company BADco.

The final section, "Persistent Resistance," features essays on political activism by artists. The activist Agnese Trocchi draws on her own experience to describe how media activists over the past decade have attempted to counter the growing centralization of the Italian media industry. In "Disciplining the Avant-Garde," artist and writer Gregory Sholette describes the unfolding case of the United States versus the Critical Art Ensemble, whose founding member Steve Kurtz was suspected of biological terrorism and still stands accused of mail fraud for work related to CAE's recent activist projects on bioengineering. And in the essay "International Markets of Flesh," subRose collective member Faith Wilding describes the group's recent work, focusing on installation and performance works targeting the flow of human organs and tissues across international borders.

We conclude this issue with "A Serial Translation," a textual project by Lane Hall, who used online translation programs to translate and retranslate and translate again Article 19 of the United Nation's Universal Declaration of Human Rights: "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers."

The impetus for this issue was a 2006 conference hosted by the Center for International Education at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, organized by its Director, Patrice Petro, and by us, the editors. We wish to thank the Center for its support and also thank *Frakcija* for the opportunity to co-edit this issue.

006-033

Living with Big Brother

008-021

I Love the Smell of Data in the Morning

John E McGrath

photo: Flickr Harvested by Clint M Chilcott

Crucial to this argument was a concept of 'surveillance space', a space brought about by the act of surveillance, a space which we may inhabit simultaneously with dimensional space, but where we exist, both as surveyors and as surveyed, in a way that is different – that is performed, that incorporates non-linear views of time, that sends selves into the world to circulate.

Among the characteristics of surveillance space is the importance of its borders, its obscurities, its grains and static. We stare obsessively at surveillance camera images, at reality TV non-events, we feel our day to day actions changed, crimalised, eroticized, complexified, by the camera's eye, but the precise image of the change eludes us. The complexity of our surveyed experience comes in part from the sense that the surveillance system is always on the edge of seeing something important, but never quite able to catch it in the frame.

Ultimately the image of death haunts surveillance space. There is always the possibility that the surveillance camera will catch the image of death by mistake. And of course on 9/11 that is more or less what happened, as dozens of tourist videocams, trained on one of the sights of the modern world accidentally recorded its destruction.

However, exploring the imagery of death under surveillance in *Loving Big Brother*, I argued that the appearance of death as a kind of accidental image, a piece of trash often circulated through dodgy websites and semi-legal video compilations, had detached death from all of the narratives with which we usually attempt to surround it. As such, our experience of death in surveillance imagery is one of shocked dissatisfaction. And so we stare at the image again and again, peering at its borders, its blurriness, trying to find sense.

Deciphering Space

In surveillance space, with its obscurities and complexities, its representational as opposed to its dimensional structure, to draw on Lefebvre, the various sensory ways of experiencing space do not reinforce each other, but rather overlay differing desires and lacks.

Surveillance sound often conjures an interiority quite different to the evidence based world of visual surveillance. The sound of a secretly recorded voice played back in a court room - or used as a device in a movie - seems to provide access to the inner world of the overheard subject. When the words do not reveal enough, the instinct is to subject them to translation – to decoding. Armies of lawyers and experts will help us to determine what the words reveal about the truth of the speaker. The use of the recordings of events on UA Flight 93 to somehow determine whether Zacarias Moussaoui was mentally and morally fit to receive the death penalty is a particularly good example of this faith in decoding – where sufficient layers of translation, from Arabic to English, to political intent, were somehow expected to take us inside the mind of a man who was not there.

Brought together, the paradigms of all-seeingness and infinite capacity to interpret are, of course, Orwellian in their potential. Except that Big Brother isn't just watching, he is listening, translating, trying to see beyond the image, worrying about being watched himself, lost in the excessive possibilities of surveillance.

The images of and responses to 9/11 are in many ways typical of how lack and complexity structure surveillance space. Visually we have complete exposure of the event – the kind of evidence that is supposed to protect us – the all-seeing eye. And yet instead of solving the crime in any way, this visual evidence rather acts to circulate our incapacity to solve or prevent, brings us, instead, in our millions, face to face with the unknowability of death. Despite the desire for a narrative evoked by the 9/11 commission hearings, the 9/11 images present us with lack, not with clues.

Little wonder then, perhaps, that the gut governmental response is to try to generate more evidence for the future, and given that complete visual evidence has been proven to prove nothing, little wonder that this renewed desire for accumulation of clues is focused on the non-visual realms of sound and particularly, data.

Invading Data Space

In the UK, one of the key flashpoints in relation to post-9/11 governmental data accumulation has been around the issue of identity cards.

In many ways this is a particularly British issue. Most major European countries already have national identity cards. In some countries it is theoretically compulsory to carry them. Yet Holland, for example, seems no closer to an Orwellian nightmare than the UK. And in the USA, where passports are a minority interest, the driving license is a de facto national identity scheme.

Nonetheless the introduction of national identity cards by the UK government has become one of its most contested initiatives At some points it has even looked like the issue could initiate the collapse of the ruling Labour party government All this for a scheme which would not become fully functional until most of the current generation of politicians are retired and which the government has admitted would have done nothing to prevent either 9/11 or the 7/7 London tube attacks

Essentially the scheme proposes a card, verified by 'bio-metric data' by which is meant retina patterns and face recognition software as well as finger prints which would provide access to government services such as the National Health Service, and which would form the primary means of ID for everything from driving license applications to, of course, police checks

The ways in which the plan might impact on containing terrorism are so contested that it is easy to imagine that the hidden reasons for the legislation must either be corrupt – the influence of the many companies set to profit from the enormously expensive scheme or totalitarian – the resurgence of Soviet-era desires for population monitoring in the now free market once socialist British Labour Party These are certainly the specters that the opponents of the scheme tend to raise

However the plan arose in response to terrorism and politically functions as a response to terrorism, however practically ineffective it may prove to be And alongside the various other measures by US and UK governments to acquire everything from library records to google searches in an orgy of data accumulation, the identity card plan in the UK functions not least in a realm of symbolic compensation akin to Colonel Kilgore s napalm attacks Data accumulation may not find any bodies, but boy does it smell like the answer

A Picture of You

Faced with video images of terrorism, and, thanks to Al-Jazeera, of its perpetrators, video images that should do the work of detection and prevention, but don't government agencies seek to interpret, to decode in order to accumulate a knowledge of the other

The civil liberties organizations campaigning against these initiatives have relatively little impact not because the government's arguments are compelling, they are not but because the civil liberties argument that somehow they will use this information to 'build up a picture of you' and invade your privacy' simply do not concern people sufficiently Weak arguments are met with weak counter-arguments The old crime (now terrorism) prevention versus protection of privacy arguments are re-iterated and, watched by the surveillance cameras that were supposed to solve crime and destroy our privacy long ago, we shrug and worry about other things

Data Day Living

Yet just as the mass deployment of surveillance cameras has changed our world and affected our psyches on many levels outside the crime prevention versus privacy dichotomy so the accumulation of data is having potentially profound effects

An understanding of those effects may help us to develop our responses to governmental shock and awe tactics in relation to data accumulation

As long ago as 1990 Mark Poster suggested that the versions of us accumulated on databases circulate like extra bodies with their own lives and histories To a degree we all manipulate these bodies enhancing a CV here omitting a medical detail or a bad debt there Differing versions of our data selves circulate in differing situations

In recent years this engagement with data bodies has become far more active Through sites such as MySpace and various web dating and other online meeting places, the 'personal profile has become a simple, effective way for us to send realistic, selective enhanced or plain false versions of ourselves into the datasphere The creation of a profile creates a series of choices about how we will relate to a new data self Which elements of our personality will we emphasise? What waist size shall we use – the one from a couple of years ago that we hope to get back to soon, or the current temporary reality? What music choices shall we describe, those that match our image of ourselves, or those that reflect our daily listening? And if eight inches is really six inches on the web does that mean you need to claim nine inches in order to persuade people that your five inches is really seven?

SHOP1

photo: Flickr Harvested by Clint M Chilcott

Of course if people get to know you via an online profile and gain some key information – name, location, job – they can quickly google you and start to build up their own version of what you might be.

It is less and less the case that the real meeting is in any way the desired outcome of online networks. Complex alternative spaces such as Second Life create worlds in which data selves can interact in a way that real life interactions cannot match. Moreover, for certain online relationships such as those between buyers and sellers on e-bay, the data status of the individual may be crucial to the formation of a relationship – e-bay reputations being a very significant currency – whereas real life meeting would be a tangential accident.

You Are No Longer Important

Artist Julia Scher, always ahead of the surveillance game, was quick to parody the disturbing way in which a database and its commercial controllers may take what they need from us and move on. Her website *Wonderland* (1997) asks us to enter the following data:

Are you afraid of the Future? Yes/No

Do you abuse yourself? Yes/No

What advances in technology frighten you?

Once we have entered our replies and clicked, the page changes and a voice comes through our computer speakers: "Your data has been downloaded. You are no longer important to us."

Scher brilliantly indicates the way in which a data body may develop a life of its own and abandon us. We feel abused, maybe, and slightly panicked that a version of us exists out there made up only of our answers to these three troublingly disparate questions. The disappearance of our data and the computer's voice emphasizing its disconnection from us, brings home a fact that we often ignore when handing over information to everyone from credit card companies to Microsoft Network: our data circulates in a field we cannot physically enter, it's reappearance or adjustment is never entirely in our control.

The crime/terrorism prevention and privacy protection arguments attempt to arrest this disturbing instability by creating the fantasy of a fixed data self. For the civil libertarians this involves a world where the government will 'know all about you' through accumulating a mass of data on everything from your medical history to your shopping patterns. The government claims it is involved in protection against identity theft by creating a card that can match precisely to you and only you. Both arguments rest on the idea that there is one true image of you in the datasphere and both trade on the fear that that image can be in some way taken from you. In the civil liberties argument, the government, in holding your data, will in some way come to hold or own you. In the government's propaganda around identity theft, the world is full of people who want to pretend to be you, and if your data isn't protected, you may be responsible for their actions in your name.

In fact, however, it is in the instability of the relationship between real and data selves that the source of dataveillance proliferation lies. The recognition, as parodied by Julia Scher, that we have already, unintentionally, sent unsatisfactory selves into the datasphere, creates the desire to develop other, better, contradictory selves.

Trusting Strangers

A datasphere populated by multiple versions of self, is equally, of course, populated by multiple others. In Second Life our digital others can build worlds together, but it's perhaps even more important to examine the ways in which the many inhabitants of data space interact with bodies in the three-dimensional world.

The work of multi-media performance practitioners, Blast Theory, explores the boundaries between dimensional and digital spheres in a range of thought provoking ways. For their award-winning online performance-game, *Can You See Me Now?* (2001) the audience played from computers across the world in a virtual city against performers who were running across a real city. The performer-runners appeared in the online city through the use of tracking devices, and they were able to visualize the online world through handheld computers. There was a live sound feed from runner-performers to audience-players. So, two groups in entirely different realities competed against each other. Sometimes, however, the realities bled – one audience-player described his panic when, while trying to escape the clutches of a runner, he heard live audio feed of what sounded like the runner being hurt in a traffic accident.

Blast Theory play a lot with the role of memory and relationship in the online world. At the start of *Can You See Me Now?* online players were asked the question 'Is there someone you haven't seen for a long time that you still think of?' At the end of the game, if the player is caught by the runner, the name of that missing person is heard again: 'Runner One has seen (the name)'.

Blast Theory's own description of the project clearly articulates how they play with the overlap and inconsistency between real and digital environments, and how memory, emotion and sensation are used to elucidate these crossovers and differences.

At times the two cities seem identical, the virtual pavement and the real pavement match exactly and behave in the same way. At other times the two cities diverge and appear very remote from one another. For example, traffic is always absent from the virtual city. Thirdly, the internet itself brings geographically distant players into the same virtual space. It also enables those players to run alongside the runners as it streams their walkie talkie chat. Fourthly, the name of someone you haven't seen for a long time but you still think of brings someone from the player's past into the present: their name is spoken aloud by a runner on the distant streets of the city and exists for a second before fading into the ether. Finally, the photos taken by runners of the empty terrain where each player is seen are uploaded to the site and persist as a record of the events of each game. Each player is forever linked to this anonymous square of the cityscape.

In their subsequent piece, *Uncle Roy All Around You* (2003), the company created a world where audience-participants could choose whether to play online or on the streets. Both groups needed to develop navigation skills partly dependent on their relationship with the figures in the other sphere, and ultimately the piece explored the notion of trust online, asking participants the question 'When can you begin to trust a stranger?' Success in the game depended on forming a trusting relationship with a player on the other side of the digital divide. At the end of the game, successful street and online players are invited to extend the commitment of trust:

Somewhere in the game there is a stranger who is also answering these questions. Are you willing to make a commitment to that person that you will be available for them if they have a crisis? The commitment will last for 12 months and, in return, they will commit to you for the same period.

Of course acting on this pairing of trust, or dismissing the commitment as the rhetoric of the game, will be a choice for players, but the possibility of a real, dramatic commitment to a stranger who has only been know across the digital divide is real.

Blast Theory introduce a complexity, a sensuality and an emotional resonance, to the world of digital identities. They emphasise the separateness of the bodily and digital worlds, but also their capacity to affect each other in ways that have little to do with statistical information. Very importantly, Blast Theory's work implies an engagement and society-building understanding that takes responsibility for and interest in the digital and hybrid realities of others as well as of the self.

Fear of a Black Profile

Contrast this with the fearful relationship to the digital self and other propagated by both government and civil liberties agencies – where a false version of the self will somehow become a tool to harm you. In the media, this fear is often embodied in the most predictable way. For example, a *Time Out London* article in the early days of identity theft panic was typical:

It was a similar story in April 1993 when Customs officers discovered eight air-mail letters, each stuffed with cocaine, which were being sent to a house in Wembley. When the house was raided, the police found Susan Cole trying to climb out of a back window, but when detectives went to see Cole's parents, they realized that they were dealing with a clever impostor. The real Susan Cole lived in Kent and was platinum blonde. The woman they had arrested was black.

As in the world of visual surveillance, the discourse of crime quickly moves to identify the racial other as the feared true subject of surveillance interest. The particular fear conjured by data is that somehow we may be turned into this other if someone does not protect us.

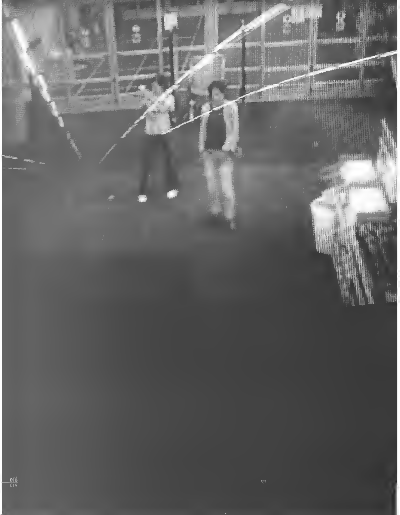


photo Flickr Harvested by Clint M Chilcott

Desiring Inclusion

David Lyon has astutely pointed out that much of data surveillance operates by generating a desire to opt in – we want to be credit worthy voters with clean driving licenses and health insurance. Indeed it is by falling out of this protective consumer data net that we become subject to the punitive force of disciplinary surveillance.

Lyon argues that the prevalence of data surveillance, and of our engagement with it, and the relative marginalization of disciplinary surveillance to an economically excluded underclass is a reason to move beyond Foucauldian spatial metaphors in analyzing surveillance. However, the rapidity with which arguments pro and anti data surveillance re-introduce the idea of the indisciplined body to the debate indicates that we are far from free of space and body when we enter the datasphere.

Work such as Blast Theory's indicates how we can approach the desires and imaginings that accompany our longing for data inclusion, as well as a more complex critical analysis of how data fears function.

What we can't expect is for our desires and longings to disappear, simply because the government has become involved. Indeed, as I analyse at some length in *Loving Big Brother*, the role of legislation and policing in surveillance space is intimately related to the vectors of desire and identification in that space, so when British philosopher AC Grayling writing in *The Times* criticises

the lazy argument that people use when they say, "I have credit cards, store cards, a passport, a driving license — why would one more card make *any difference?"*

and declares rather that

ID cards are wholly different. They carry comprehensive information about you, stored on a microchip connected to an Orwellianly-named "National Identity Register". This changes your relationship with the State entirely. You are no longer a private citizen, but in effect a number-plated unit who can be monitored by the authorities for any purpose.

his characterization of citizen compliance with surveillance is the usual liberal frustration with the population's failure to see privacy protection as the core value that bourgeois normative society has identified it as being.

Grayling buys into the same kind of frustration that has as sophisticated an analyst as Baudrillard fuming at the phenomenon of reality TV like a retired schoolteacher.

But like the performances enacted by the subjects of reality TV, our data selves are, we know, provisional, shifting cousins to our conscious selves. We instinctively recognise that we have entered a world infinitely stranger and more complex than that which Grayling imagines.

Have You Ever Fallen in Love over the Phone?

The experiments and art works through which we explore these new possibilities need not be technologically advanced. One of the most resonant performances in recent years exploring interactions in the datasphere was *Call Cutta*, by Berlin based collective, Rimini Protocol. Rimini Protocol have a history of exploring unexpected subject matter by engaging what they refer to as 'specialists' in the making of the performance. So, for example, in their 2004 piece *Deadline*, which explored contemporary experiences of death, the performers included forensic doctors, crematorium employees, tombstone sculptors, psychiatric nurses, florists, clear-out companies, and cemetery musicians. For *Call Cutta*, the company wanted to explore the relationship we have with call centres and the ways in which call centres approach us and deal with us (a subject also examined in the very different but also very effective theatre piece *Alladeen* by Builders Association and Moti Roti). Following their usual logic for this new piece, Rimini Protocol developed the performance by setting up a call centre in Calcutta, which audiences in Berlin could call to experience the performance.

Now the data with which call centres deal can range from the entirely impersonal – the train arrival times which, in the UK, we now get from Bangalore, to the pretty intimate. Recently in the UK there was an investigation into call centre workers for a major bank who were being bribed to hand over complete financial details on clients.

For *Call Cutta*, the call center operators were trained at length in the details of customer service and manipulation, but rather than having the normal goal of making a sale, or imparting a piece of information in the minimum time possible, these operators were attempting to take the audience members on an emotional journey which might include everything from surrendering to childhood memories to falling in love over the phone The performers had scripts which drew on the kinds of options and routes that guide the calls made by call centre sales teams, but their scripts drew attention to exactly the kind of things that call centre calls are usually structured to hide – distance, history geography and the personality of the call centre operator

Call Cutta like the work of Blast Theory, introduced emotion and personal relations into what is usually a banal exchange of data It also drew attention to the economic realities underlying data accumulation – the company didn't have actors in Berlin pretending to be call centre operators they actually set up a call centre, and happily highlighted the fact that audience members were paying many times more per hour for their ticket than the call centre operators were earning

Call Cutta emotionalized the exchange of data, and also placed data transactions in the real world of globalised capital, drawing our attention to the fact that the abstract pieces of information accumulated about us not only have an identity separate to us but also interact with people of whose existence we, in our real world selves may hardly be aware

Access and Fantasy

The data worlds and data selves that are multiplying at such a pace exist in a moral, emotional and sensory sphere which has little to do with the privacy of our physical bodies and acts Indeed it may be the case that the ethical and emotional impact of a data self is less felt by the body from which the data is drawn than it is by another individual whose job or responsibility it is to deal with the data, or who is accused of an association with the data Our legal and political framework ought not focus on the seemingly natural relationship of body and data, but rather on a right of access to the data with which we are involved and which is allowed to affect our lives

British civil liberties group, Liberty has, while leading on the anti-identity card campaign, also been doing extremely important work on other areas of the UK government's knee jerk anti-terrorism legislation Most recently, Liberty celebrated a court victory when a UK High Court ruled that legislation allowing house arrest of terror suspects breached human rights because it limited the information on the case that an appeal judge could see This battleground of information disclosure and access is a far more important area of political struggle than limitations on government data gathering

Equally important will be the right to inject emotion relationship and even fantasy into the datasphere It is in our capacity to generate multiple sometimes contradictory data selves that our potential for response to governmental data accumulation lies

And whereas privacy arguments inevitably focus on the individual's relationship with her or his own data, relationships to the data of others may be increasingly important in the developing hybrid world of data and dimensional space

Some Day this War's Gonna End...

When Colonel Kilgore falls in love with the smell of napalm, we identify with his instinctive attempt to make a kind of living sense of the world in which he finds himself Here is a man whose senses deranged though they might be, are trying to create meaning in an insane situation However, we also appreciate the fact that he is representative of an army and a government functioning on an entirely symbolic level, where the felt effect of a napalm attack smells like victory even though it may have done absolutely nothing to bring victory closer Colonel Kilgore is the epic mask of defeat

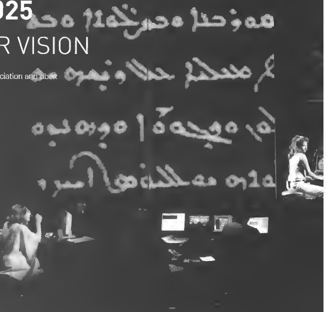
In the governmental data frenzy following 9/11 we see an equivalent attempt to create a symbolic reality in response to a terrible actuality Faced with images that can't be erased, and visual evidence that leads nowhere, governments hope that relentless gathering of the kind of data that would have done little to prevent the attacks will somehow create an impression of control By massive accumulation of data, government agencies hope somehow to fix the fluid, changing identities that populate the datasphere It is this attempt to fix, to stabilize the flow of data, which should trouble us more than arguments about identity cards, library records or search result histories

However like Colonel Kilgore's battle plans, a governmental policy functioning primarily on the symbolic level may have dire immediate consequences, but will have limited practical application to future social organisation As the data clouds clear there are very few dead or captured bodies presented to us as the result of the government's legislative frenzy Meanwhile, we continue to send selves into the datasphere And these selves continue to have a range of differing impacts One day, we will understand our relation to our data selves and others in new and more complex ways For now, we can at least refuse the narratives of fear in relation to data bodies, and recognize that our data is part of our emerging emotional and cognitive future

022-025

SUPER VISION

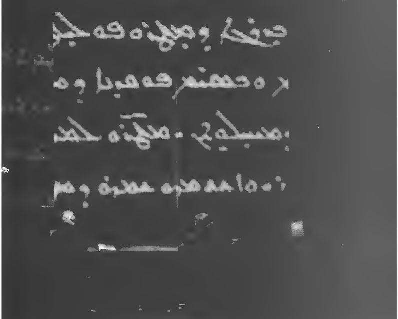
The Builders Association and dbox



Super Vision is a cross-media performance produced by two New York-based groups, the performance and media ensemble The Builders Association and the multidisciplinary design studio dbox. It opened in October, 2005, in Minneapolis, MN, and in addition to playing across the US, including at the Brooklyn Academy of Music's Next Wave Festival, it was performed in 2006 in the UK, Australia, New Zealand, and Spain.

Super Vision explores the impact of databanks on everyday life—on family memory, personal identity, and movements across international borders. In particular, it foregrounds the phenomena of "dataveillence," the use of databanks to identify, monitor, and analyze individuals and groups. The performance opens with a Prologue in which actress Tanya Selvaratnam introduces the audience to its data body, its collective yet personalized bodies of digital information. This info is based on zip codes attained from the credit cards used to purchase tickets to the performance. The Builders then utilizes the marketing research firm Claritas to profile the audience's socioeconomic makeup. The effect is both unsettling and uncanny, as one learns the average income differences between various groups in the audience.

But at the heart of *Super Vision* lie three scenarios in which the entwining of personal life and dataveillance becomes acutely visible for both characters and audience. In one, a young woman in New York regularly videochats with her distant grandmother in Sri Lanka, asking her about family photos and diaries that she is digitizing. In the midst of archiving the past, she discovers in real-time that her grandmother's own memory and perception of the world are rapidly deteriorating. In a second scenario, a father secretly steals his own son's identity and creates a fraudulent person who manages multiple financial accounts, opening and closing them as needed to avoid detection. His wife's discovery that their young son is massively in debt causes him to flee to the geographical equivalent of the data netherworld: the frozen, far North. The third scenario follows the travails of an international businessman whose frequent border crossings trigger the interests of immigration authorities and their dataveillance systems. Initially overwhelmed by the complex and often erroneous "connections" attributed to his data body, the businessman eventually learns to live and learn with Big Brother.



Yet *Super Vision* also entwines people and data at another level, that of the stage design. While the Prologue is performed in front of the stage, the rest of the performance takes place onstage, but on and between two large projection surfaces: a solid, immobile, white screen stretching across the entire back of the stage—and, in the front, a series of large scrims that roll on and off stage. Two powerful video projectors illuminate the screen from behind, while two other projectors illuminate the scrims from the front. In between these two projection surfaces, the performers move about on a narrow stage. Changes in lighting and projection allows them to appear fully lit, in silhouette, or somewhere in-between. Lighting can also control the relative transparency of the front scrim, allowing images to be either projected *on* or *through* it. Performers interact with one another and with projected people and objects. But the most stunning effects occur when the performers become immersed in data, when characters' physical bodies come in contact with their data bodies—written documents, photographs, numbers, etc. Down below the stage, on the house floor, is a long table with computer stations. At some stations, technicians cue up and control the computer projections, at others, actors perform roles which are captured by cameras and projected up on stage. The entire set has the appearance of a screen or monitor, as if the audience is monitoring the workings of dataveillance, which, as the Prologue reveals, also monitors the audience. Thus the relation of physical body/data body is mirrored in the onstage interface of performers and media and in the relation of audience/stage

CREDITS
Conceived and created by The Builders Association & dbox
Director_Marianne Weems
Conception_James Gibbs, Marianne Weems, Matthew Bann[illegible] Charles d'Autremont, Dan Dobson,
Text_Constance De Jong
Additional text by company members
Prologue_Tanya Selvaratnam with Marianne Weems
Initial Story Development_Jed Weintrob and Andrew Osborne
Set and Costume Design_Stewart Laing
Lighting_Jennifer Tipton, Allen Hahn
Virtual Design_dbox
Video Design_Peter Flaherty
Sound Design and Original Music Composition_Dan Dobson
Executive Producer_Kim Whitener
Production Manager_Neal Wilkinson
Technical Director_Joseph Silovsky
Technical Manager_Jamie McElhinney
Video Associate_Jeff Morey
Video Associate_Hal Eagar (Courtesy of the Gertrude Stein Repertory Theatre)
Lighting Associate_Miranda Hardy
Tour Producer/Company Manager_Claire Hallereau
Managing Director_Lexa Robertson
Cast
Grandmother_Moe Angelos
Carol_Kyle deCamp
Traveller_Rizwan Mirza
John Sr._David Pence
Jen/The Voice of ClaritasTM_Tanya Selvaratnam
Border Agent_Joseph Silovsky
John Jr. (on video)_Owen Philip

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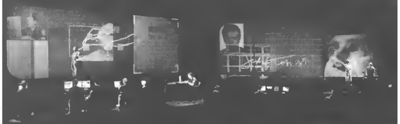

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026-033

Specters of Global Communication

A. Aneesh

As Bharati awoke from unsettling dreams one morning, she found herself transformed into a specter, a form of data called Tina. It was not the metamorphosis of Kafka's story where Gregor found himself alone in his new form as a monstrous vermin, unfit for everyday life. Gregor's transformation may be likened to someone who loses his legs in an accident only to realize that the real accident happens after the recovery, when the conspicuous absence of legs transforms one into a living anomaly, erasing all familiar lines of social recognition, when one stops to matter. No. Bharati's awakening was not shocking for the same reasons. Quite the opposite, she discovered that she mattered more in her new form. Indeed, her previous "real" self was now a glitch to be corrected in preparation for her new spectral form, her accented English needed to be neutralized in favor of the global English required for global communication. Rendered as a form of data, Bharati was both shocked and enthused about her spectral form, shocked because she had to erase what she thought was her real self, and enthused because her transformation enhanced her life chances.

Bharati[1] is a composite of agents who work for international call centers in Gurgaon,[2] India where I conducted ethnographic research in 2004-05. Bharati's transformation began long before her sudden realization. To be accurate, it was the day the voice and accent training program began in the first call center for which she worked. Although she knew English quite well, she was dismayed to realize that all her knowledge of how English syllables should sound was somewhat incorrect, or, more accurately, her speech could not be fully understood by the English-speaking folks in the United States, Australia and the United Kingdom. As accents are parts of the body, linking movements of the tongue, teeth and neural wiring in a seamless fashion, Bharati found it extremely difficult, as did her colleagues, to change or "neutralize" their accent.

The problem of accent was only a small part of a more general problem: how was cross-cultural conversation possible? When a person sitting in Gurgaon near New Delhi called an American in Little Rock, Arkansas about debt collection, how were they able to communicate with each other? The problem of double contingency haunts all global communication. Double contingency refers to the problem that each person in communication must take into account not only the intended signified but also the received signified, which makes communication improbable and unpredictable. This forms a disturbing circularity: the receiver depends on the communicator and the communicator depends on the receiver. Shared cultural norms, values and role expectations, it is believed, have developed in order to avoid the problem of double contingency in practice. But how is it feasible to develop shared norms for live cross-cultural communication? Clearly, the problem has far wider implications for global communicative practices, which seek to bridge the worlds culturally and geographically removed from each other.

It was clear from the numerous conversations I heard in a call center that although the language of communication was English, the intonation, inflection, meaning, stress, slang, accent and even expectations of formal conversation were not shared. It was not certain if all calling agents understood such common informal expressions as "dude," "jerk," "nuts," "geek," or "bucks." Bharati had not grown up hearing these expressions. Disjunctures in cross-cultural communication routinely led to failed conversations, or worse, no conversation when the two parties talked past each other. In telemarketing or collection calls the failures were marked, and indeed, countable through the differences in average revenue generated by each caller every month. Failures aside, global communication of this sort has been experiencing a dramatic rise.

Voice & Accent Training programs in India's call centers have gone through a paradigm shift from the *imitation* of foreign accent to the *neutralization* of regional accents in English. In the late 1990s, voice and accent training programs were geared toward *imitation*, i.e., training agents in American or British accent. But poor imitation created more problems than it solved. Language, especially accent, turned out to be an embodied form of capital difficult to acquire in a short period. It became clear that the cultural gulf was not as easy to cross as previously imagined. Even a single mistake in recognizing the other person's accent or mispronouncing a common word meant sounding completely fake, and losing the trust of the customer. The shift in approach required that the effort be directed at making communication possible instead of imitating accents, to understand, and be understood by, the other party. The pace, emphasis, and intonation became more important than sounding like an American.

To make such communication possible, Bharati needed to be transformed. She had to acquire a neutral accent, learn informal expressions through formal training, and study the geography of America: its states, cities, capitals, streets and street abbreviations. She diligently took notes in her training sessions; she memorized that "geek" is "someone who works too hard, is more intelligent than usual, and is slightly unattractive."

Bharati also memorized the capitals of all the fifty states of the United States of America. To make sure she pronounced the names correctly, she jotted down in her native Hindi, a highly phonetic script, the correct pronunciation of the names that the English script rendered ambiguous.

[1] No real names are used in this article to protect identity.

[2] Gurgaon is a city twenty kilometers away from New Delhi. It has the biggest cluster of international call centers in India.

Date ______

Megabucks = a lot of money
antifreeze = liquor
bummer = bad experience
rough time = hard time
smoke eater = fireman
con = deceive
scarfed down = ate quickly
yukky = bad
freebie = free
big guns = powerful people
cop = policeman
gross = disgusting
goofy: gofy = silly
chicken = coward
beat = exhausted
rack out = sleep
hang tough on = stick with
rathole = run down place
Groovy = pleasant
Kept his cool = remained calm.
can = bathroom
pooped out = quit
couch potato = lazy person

For example, she made sure that she did not mispronounce Wichita as Wikita, that "ch" there is not as in chemistry but as in charcoal

Bharati was surprised to know that the United States used more than 20 types of street designations from Boulevards to Alleys to Drives, and each had its own acronym Selling mortgages to people in the United States she often had to note down addresses on her job How could she be trusted with people s finances if she did not know the format of American forms or addressing? Such street designations were obviously not used in India She committed all the street designations to memory

In addition Bharati also had to learn how to talk on the phone, or rather, how to sell on the phone to a type of customer she had never seen in person and she would indeed never see in her life She was required to learn by heart how to react to negative responses from the other end what kind of readymade phrases she could employ to keep the conversation going and avert the usual painful sound of hanging up at the other end She was also asked to be assertive but not aggressive This style of speech was something not known to her from her cultural upbringing in north India where one respected the old and advised the young In her new spectral form, she had to adapt to a way of speech that was already common in cultures of telemarketing She also trained to prepare in advance her responses to possible objections that may be raised by her American customers

She had to acquire the habit of showing authentic emotions on the phone for example, by feeling sorry for someone whose spouse met with an accident but without losing the track of where the conversation was supposed to go When she was advised to keep a smiling face while talking on the phone she objected that her clients could not possibly see her face on the phone She was quickly corrected with general advice that friendly voices can only proceed from friendly faces Smiles do convert into talk There were remarks to this effect on her performance evaluations

In global communication it is not enough to neutralize an accent, commit to memory the information about cities that one would never visit across the globe, or smile to a person one would never see in person, one is also supposed to "know" the person on the other side of the phone, or at least, one should have a spectral image in mind of the person with whom one is being friendly Who are these Americans? What are their attitudes toward government, work leisure and life? Bharati enjoyed getting to know at least the scripted version of Americans

However Bharati experienced something of a spectral shock when she actually started talking after two long months of training with the people living in the United States During many of her conversations, she discovered that the Americans were extremely rude, far more impolite than her previous experiences dealing with the British or Australians in other call centers She understood that she was made to intrude on the privacy of these people during their evening meal hours or leisure time What she did not know was the fact that the scripted version of Americans she came to know during her training left out for obvious reasons strict American notions of private and public time notions that are not necessarily shared in the same way by British, Australian or Indian forms of sociality! Bharati could hear their angered voices at this invasion of privacy Privacy was a sacred sphere for most Americans Indeed their understanding of freedom was almost synonymous with privacy their protest against governmental spying of citizens was framed in terms not of public freedom but of an invasion of privacy that is a form of freedom that demands protection by the law rather than participation in the formulation or execution of the law Bharati experienced culture shock without ever visiting the United States True in calmer moments, some Americans would also open up telling her their life stories, their dreams and desires, their understanding of their own world Yet, during those very moments when her potential customers threatened to sound real whether in their rudeness or openness they also became less relevant for her While rudeness was a personal affront, their openness was troublesome, too As she was not allowed to hang up on a potential customer, long and meandering life stories only wasted her precious talk time

Customers relevance for her job was strictly reduced to their profiles as potential customers Evidently, it was not only Bharati who was required to transform herself into Tina the target audience of her calls was also not persons, she was calling only their profiles In her own spectral form, she communicated with the specters of others people s data doubles Indeed, she was not the one who dialed all those phone numbers It was a software program called "Dialer," which targeted specific profiles with strict parameters covering credit history, buying habits and such demographic variables as age gender region and education For example, if Bharati sold mortgages, the dialer would not dial the profiles that had already paid off their loans, but the dialer may call someone s profile that might belong to a lower age group a potential remodeler or a buyer on the look out for a second home In a way, Bharati's dialogue with its customers was not social but a postsocial conversation between two sets of spectral life forms

Since the 1990s modes of existence have multiplied in the United States Apart from physical and virtual forms of togetherness (e g virtual communities on the web), one also exists in the form of data including one's credit history buying habits and such demographic variables as age gender, region and education One's data doubles have not only attained a degree of objectivity, they have also become

Date ______

honcho = boss
cushy = easy
deep pockets = good source of Money
Knock out : stunning
grungy = dirty
Z's = Sleep
cold fish = dull
bent = angry
party - hearty = celebrate
piece of cake = easy
tin head = stupid person
big mouth = talk too much
nukes = nuclear weapon
SMashed = intoxicated
pop = hit
in = fashionable
grub = food
dork = strange person
cheesy = cheap
pad = place to live
(Don't have it all together = Don't feel mentally all
Just off the boat = naive. (there!)

more effective in predicting one s life chances For instance, in order to get a loan for purchasing a house in the United States one s FICO scores are better predictors of one's chances of getting a good annual percentage rate (APR) for the loan than one's cultural or social capital

Gone are the days when one's attire, speech one's extensive social network, and the polished sureness of one's social behavior were able to arouse trust in a banker In order to impress a bank executive, one must now tweak one's FICO profile through techniques of improving credit history, for instance by not acquiring or canceling too many credit cards, by presenting a specter who could be trusted by the banking system Physical and social forms of existence have increasingly become less relevant to one's building an abode or having a life in general in the United States This conversion of life into data enables a field of global communication that otherwise would not be possible As software dialers in India's international call centers connect Bharati with her western clients based on clients data doubles one notices how Bharati's life is re-adjusted to fit its data forms In order to communicate with the specters of her customers, Bharati must be transformed into her own specter, Tina After all, it was a question of data compatibility

Sometime in the late 1990s, American data profiles staged a coup, dethroning people's so-called real existence from centers of life As a testimonial to this social transformation, a film described the society as a ' matrix " though mistakenly portraying most of us as near-dead, vegetative beings hooked up to the machine while our imagined identities played freely in the virtual space The film was accurate however in one respect if one wanted to matter one could accomplish a change only through one s data form Two basic implications of the film were misplaced that we would become vegetables amusing ourselves to death and would fail to be of consequence in the 'real" world The second assumption that was wrong was the metaphor of visual entertainment media whether that of computer games or television (though understandable for its breathtaking fight sequences) This implication borrows heavily from the Heideggerian depiction of modernity as a conquest of the world by "picture," mediated through Baudrillard's important concept of simulacrum In fact the dark humor of being inside a computer game is not dark enough, as it allows the seductive integration with video avatars to be painless and seamless But the rise of *postsocial* reality in the story of Bharati is not without its experiential shock of an acute and felt disjuncture it is not smooth or seamless because there are no vegetative beings attached to the machine What is important in this story is the intrinsic clash of systems Postsocial does not mean that one can no longer be social Indeed, there will always be greetings on the street, there will still be smiles of civil attention small gestures of help on trains, buses, parks and houses, there will still be dating games, furtive glances, tears for the departed, experiences of shame, and the blood rush of sudden desire The rise of the postsocial does not herald the death of the social unless we yield to a false notion of a completely automated world Indeed, the conflict between postsocial systems and the still operating social and biological forms of existence is experienced as a peculiar shock This shock can be explained through the analogy of the *alarm clock* An alarm clock operates on two frontiers at once On the one hand, it follows the logic of "time table ' connecting us to the economic system, the alarm clock wakes us up to catch a flight which takes us to a business meeting at noon that is, it connectsus to the economic system with its own functional logic of operation, in a network of functional connections (e g businesses employees, project deadlines, or how the latest iPdd must ship by Christmas to maximize sales, connecting Apple actors with the ordinary consumer in a long chain of systemic integration)

On the other hand the alarm clock also connects to the body through a loud sound, waking the body from its slumber But this connection between the social system and the body is also a connection between two separate realms producing more often than not an experience of shock When the alarm clock goes off at its scheduled time in the morning, the body may be in the middle of its deep sleep cycle The shock of being awakened from deep slow-wave, or delta, sleep is experienced as a bolt from the blue Hence the snooze button When the clock connects the economic system and the biological system, the experience is that of shock

The conflict between the social and the postsocial is similar in consequences First of all, Bharati experienced the shock of her biological clock, as she was required to work at night to serve her day clientele in the United States Working 'night in and night out, her circadian rhythm lost its rhythm, she felt chronically sleep deprived and literally considered herself a "walking ghost " a specter of sorts Combined with the biological shock was a social shock "Hardly anybody recognizes you, ' Bharati[3] ruminated " you come in when nobody sees you When you wake up in the evening, you see all your newspapers At 8 PM you pick up your newspapers when it's your good morning You browse through the news for the day that happened yesterday ..." Her daytime social world increasingly became less relevant as she admitted that "after a while you stop listening to the news, then you stop reading the newspapers All you want to do is get your pillow and sleep, get up, go, make your calls, come back, and sleep You don't want to know what's happening in the world " This postsocial reality had its own sociality Her nightly life had its rhythms and schedules, she even made friends at work who, like her, worked the same schedule, even if she talked to them only during the ' lunch hour every night There were hardly any other breaks allowed by the dialer, which made 250-300 calls a night with only a few calls materializing in conversations

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[3] While "Bharat " is used as a composite of about a hundred workers interviewed the quotations are from actually tape-recorded interviews with different workers

The dialer-paced work, combined with the pressure to make at least one sale a night for receiving her incentive-based income, did not allow too many breaks for the social life at work to gain thickness of its own Her friends still tended to be from her pre-call-center world but the urgent question was how long such friendships could endure without her presence or participation

Her parents were also applying a not-so-subtle pressure for marriage something irrelevant to her postsocial shadowy world But once the shock of social death dawned on her, she decided to quit a decision with which she was quite happy, as she noted about her batchmates I think sixteen of us quit and two people are still there We did not know [each other s intent to leave] the day we met but we all ended up leaving So it was good I think everybody who stays on in a call center does not have an option That is what I feel The day I quit, senior people who were working there for two years said they also want to quit but they can t I asked, why' and they said, Where will we get a job?" They were correct For a few months Bharati looked for and failed to find a daytime job

Her neutral accent her knowledge of American geography, work processes and American people were of no use to any other industry It was shocking for her to realize that Tina – her postsocial data form – was completely non-functional in the daytime world of regular jobs Bharati was at a crossroads she could keep looking for regular daytime jobs, the prospects for which seemed bleak or she could go back to call center industry where finding a job again would not be a problem She decided for the latter Bharati[4] joined another call center within six months Like Gregor she failed She failed to slough off her new life form But unlike Gregor she realized once again that she mattered more in her spectral existence Her second life improved her chances for her now subjugated first life While in Gregor, the split showed itself in a stark disjuncture between perceiving and being perceived Bharati carried the split within

[4] This pattern of leaving and [illegible] is very common among call center [illegible] Gurgaon India

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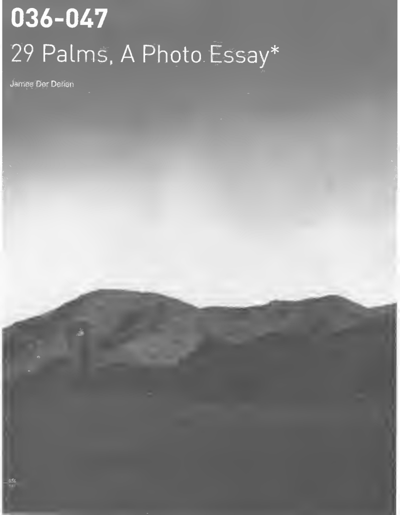
Data Interventions

036-047

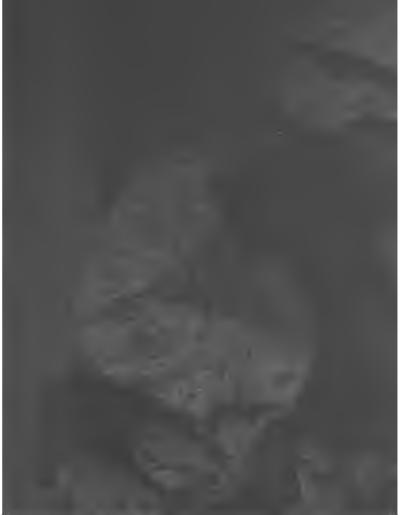
29 Palms, A Photo Essay*

James Der Derian



- In March, 2006, I went with a documentary film crew to the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center at Twentynine Palms, California, to embed with New England reservists from First Battalion, 25th Marines as they engaged in 'Mojave Viper', a counter-insurgency urban warfare exercise that would be their final preparation before departing for Al Anbar Province in Iraq. We were there to observe what happens when the military, relying on the expertise of political scientists, cultural anthropologists and other academic experts and a cast of Arab-Americans playing 'good' and 'bad' Iraqis, produced a new set of wargames to create a more 'culturally sensitive' Marines. The effort was a valiant one, but from what we witnessed, Marines, whose motto is 'no better friend, no worse enemy', found it difficult to bridge the cultural divide, especially when they discovered that the role-players were getting more money for the job than they were. After a week of dust-storms, MRE's, and getting shot at (fortunately only with 'sim-rounds'), I could understand why the Marines would prefer the maps of their 'Cultural Smart Cards' to the reality of Iraq that they would soon face. Jean Baudrillard's famous riff on J.L.Borges seemed to capture the experience best:

Today abstraction is no longer that of the map, the double, the mirror, or the concept. Simulation is no longer that of a territory, a referential being, or a substance. It is the generation by models of a real without origin or reality: a hyperreal. The territory no longer precedes the map, nor does it survive it. It is nevertheless the map that precedes the territory—precession of simulacra— that engenders the territory, and if one must return to the fable, today it is the territory whose shreds slowly rot across the extent of the map. It is the real, and not the map, whose vestiges persist here and there in the deserts and that are not longer those of the Empire, but ours. The desert of the real itself



048-057

Points of Departure: The Culture of US Airport Screening*

Lisa Parks

For the past several months I've been conducting an experiment at airport security gates, shooting photographs of TSA facilities and screeners to determine how long I can go on before I'll be asked to stop. After shooting photos in 12 airports I've received only one warning at the US - Canada border while taking a picture of a twenty-something woman of color being interrogated by TSA workers after she was physically searched in a nearby makeshift room. I only became visible to the TSA at the moment I witnessed her visibility, but in general as a white woman I go relatively unnoticed in a US security regime largely based on racial profiling. If I were a person of color it is possible that many of these images would not exist, that my camera would have been taken, the images destroyed, or I might not have even taken the risk in the first place. In any case, it has become clear to me that the airport is no longer just a "non-place" as Marc Auge (1995) famously described it over a decade ago, but in the context of the US-led war on global terror has possibly become "the place," a charged and volatile domain punctuated by shifting regimes of biopower.

Two months after the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the US government passed the National Transportation Security Act, which authorized the formation of the Transportation Security Agency to secure the nation's airports, railways, bridges and highways. Since then the TSA has boldly declared its presence in airports, occupying and branding space as aggressively as McDonald's and Starbuck's. TSA checkpoints have been expanded with multiple lanes and cumbersome new screening equipment. TSA information boards cover airport walls and marquees. Flocks of uniformed TSA agents appear everywhere, some wearing special tags that read "I am TSA!" And every few minutes TSA public service announcements blare through loud speakers warning passengers to keep baggage in sight at all times. Indeed, the TSA relies on audiovisual practices that include such things as worker uniforms, behavioral models, placards and signs, loudspeaker announcements, digital simulations, scanning devices, and images of passengers and their belongings. In this essay, I treat the airport checkpoint as a discursive space where the state, the airlines, workers, imaging and sensing technologies, and travelers converge to orchestrate and reproduce a set of protocols designed to ensure what the TSA describes as "freedom of

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movement " Rather than confine my analysis to individuals and their private property, however I treat the checkpoint as a site of biopower that represents the shift from a paradigm of "national defense' to one of "national security" described by Hardt and Negri The notion of security,' they explain, signals a lack of distinction between inside and outside between the military and the police Whereas 'defense' involves a protective barrier against external threats 'security' justifies a constant martial activity equally in the homeland and abroad " (2004 21)

Treating the airport checkpoint as part of the new security regime my analysis concentrates on three issues First I focus on the working conditions of TSA employees whom the federal government pays to screen passengers to accentuate the enduring physicality of their labor despite the technologization of the checkpoint Second, I explore new techniques of inspection implemented at TSA checkpoints to delineate practices of close sensing that establish seamless continuities between looking and touching/handling/manipulation Finally I explore the object-oriented visual economy that takes shape at the checkpoint and I suggest that the x-ray sequence ultimately exposes the state's inability to regulate the flow of objects and matter in the age of globalization In short, I suggest that the searches, exposures and probes that define this threshold should not be only understood in terms of individual privacy invasions, but rather as an opportunity to focus on structural changes in federal labor, state surveillance and globalization that have emerged since 9/11

The TSA s multi-media multi-sensory, and material practices illuminate the ways in whichthe histories of media technologies are interwoven with that of the state and its security At different moments radio television and digital technologies have been developed and used within military and law enforcement institutions in efforts to protect national territory and citizens Technologies such as signal intelligence, closed circuit monitoring, emergency broadcasting and digital profiling have all been used to advance officially defined state security interests These issues arguably take on greater urgency after 9/11 with the passage of the Patriot Acts which authorized new regimes of observation and inspection in the U S and beyond As Patrice Petro and Andrew Martin suggest in *Rethinking Global Security*, 'In the twenty-first century the politics of war terrorism and security can hardly be separated from the practices and processes of mediation, which continue to expand and intensify Both fictional and fact based threats to the U S and global security helped to create and sustain a culture of fear, with far reaching effects (2006 1) Understood in this context, airport screening involves a set of mediation processes that have been expanded and intensified to fit the prerogatives of an anxious state

The Labor of Searching for Something

Airport screeners were first implemented in US airports during the 1970s after a series of skyjackings around the world aroused concerns about airline security In 1972 the FAA made it mandatory for airlines to search passengers and their carry-on bags and magnetometers were installed in US airports After the 1988 bombing of Pan Am flight 103 over Lockerbie Scotland airport security intensified and the FAA began to screen computers and radios more carefully on flights coming from Europe and the Middle East (You may recall that a bomb was placed in a radio given to a young woman and programmed to explode in mid air) Despite bolstered security measures, by the end of the 1990s members of the US Congress began to express concern about airport screeners At a Congressional hearing on March 16 2000 political leaders identified the airport screener as the "weak link" in airport security because of poor training high job turnover, uncompetitive compensation and benefits and a failure among private contractors to conduct rigorous background checks and random drug testing (U S House 2000 28) During this period commercial airlines paid private contractors to operate and staff airport security checkpoints in the nation s airports A comparative study with the UK Belgium, the Netherlands Germany and Canada found that US airport screeners were outclassed by better trained higher paid and professionalized screeners in other countries

In 2000 airport screeners in the US were making an average of $5 25 to 6 75 per hour, often leaving their jobs just after being trained to take jobs flipping burgers at fast food outlets in the same airport The job turnover rate at some airports including Chicago O'Hare was 400% Screeners worked long hours – often twelve-hour days – scrutinizing 20 year-old black and white monitors that were very difficult to see (U S House, 2000 37) The labor of the airport screener was described at a congressional hearing as a "repetitive monotonous and stressful task that requires constant vigilance ' (U S House 2000 8) A year before 9/11 the consensus in the US Congress was that ' inadequate training and low morale among screeners threaten safety and security in the skies " (U S House, 2000 3)

After 9/11 Bush signed the National Transportation Security Act and the number of screeners surged from 8000 private workers in the year 2000 to 53 000 federal employees in 2003[1] During this period there was a concerted effort to standardize training increase salary and benefits and produce a

professionalized class of airport screeners. The regime of screening and scrutiny at the gate became more intrusive as passengers were not only asked to pass through magnetometers and place their baggage on an x-ray machine, but over time were asked to remove belts, coats and shoes, empty their pockets and submit to wand sweeps or pat downs by TSA officials. Some passengers were also randomly selected for further searching and questioning.

The protocols and interpersonal dynamics at airport checkpoints changed dramatically after 9/11, and the gate has become a space of friction for many reasons. Passengers are annoyed by the invasiveness of the new procedures. Long lines cause delays and sometimes travelers miss their flights. Personal items are regularly and increasingly confiscated and never returned. The TSA has earned nicknames like the Tourism Suppression Agency and Thousands Standing Around. (Leff, 2005) TSA screeners have even entered the business of mood control, for as of 2004 they can fine passengers for "non-physical interference." If "attitude" becomes an "aggregating factor" the TSA is authorized to issue civil penalties ranging from $150-10,000. (Sharkey, 2004) A newlywed woman bringing a wedding cake knife in her carry-on as a memento was fined $150. (Joyner, 2004) Cecelia Beaman, A 57 year-old middle school principal and grandmother from Seattle taking care of 37 kids on a field trip to California put a bread knife that she made sandwiches with in her bag en route to the airport and forgot to take it out before the checkpoint. She was fined $500 and put on the terrorism watch list. (Reece, 2005) Other passengers with names that resemble those on the no fly list have been treated as suspect, detained and/or denied transit (such as Catherine Stevens, wife of US senator Ted Stevens whose name is like Cat Stevens, who was alleged to have ties to Muslim fundamentalists).

While checkpoint tensions have escalated, public discussions of them tend to privilege the civil liberties of the consumers/travelers over those of this new class of federal employees, many of whom only have high school educations and come from working class and non-white ethnic backgrounds. Alongside a flurry of congressional hearings, surveys have been conducted regarding TSA moral, working conditions, and effectiveness, revealing widespread discontent among TSA screeners. A recent report included comments from 11,000 TSA workers that were so negative that the federal government, despite several requests, refused to make them public and only released the quantitative parts of the study. (POGO, 2006; Arsenault, 2005) For instance, TSA workers sustain more injuries on the job than all other federal employees. In 2004 they were injured four times as often as construction workers and seven times as often as miners. (Strohm, 2005) One study found that TSA workers handling checked luggage lifted one bag every seven seconds, and most of them were more than fifty pounds. (Frank, 2005b) Not surprisingly, the most common injuries are muscle and back strains due to heavy lifting, tendonitis, hernias, and cuts and lacerations sustained while reaching into bags for sharp objects. Between 2002-2004, US taxpayers paid $67 million in expenses related to airport screeners injured on the job. Last year alone, their injuries and lost wages cost the federal government $52 million. (Frank, 2005a) In 2005 29% of all airport screeners were injured on the job and 250,000 days of work were missed, which has caused staff shortages and heightened concerns about security. (Frank, 2005b; Barr, 2005)

The checkpoint may be increasingly technologized and US taxpayers have subsidized billions of dollars worth of screening equipment in recent years, but the TSA screening process relies more heavily upon manual labor than ever requiring that workers carry heavy bags, check tickets, shuffle grey bins, search carry-ons, confiscate items, frisk passengers and operate machinery. Thus the airport checkpoint has become a state-led exercise in hand-eye coordination where workers apply manual and ocular labor to minimize risks. In addition to physical injury, there must be profound ontological confusion at the checkpoint. TSA workers are regularly subject to a variety of secret tests by undercover officers and to experiments by citizen vigilantes. The so-called Red Team is a band of secret agents that arrives at security gates to covertly evaluate operations and often attempts to pass through with illegal objects, whether guns, bombs or knives. In one exercise a woman secured a gun to her upper thigh under a thick bandage and after it was detected through wanding, she was asked about it and claimed she had staples from a recent surgery and was allowed to pass through. (U.S. House, 2003) James McNeil of the security firm McNeil Technologies smuggled a gun past the gates in Rochester and then testified to Congress about his stunt to make the case that security experts don't even know what we need to train screeners for. (U.S. House, 2003) A 20 year-old college student Nate Heatwole managed to get prohibited items including box cutters, knives and liquid bleach past airport screeners and onto aircraft, claiming he was intending to test TSA procedures. After doing this successfully on several flights, he emailed the TSA to notify the agency of his experiment and was subsequently fined $500 and put on probation. (U.S. House, 2003) While these checkpoint games are designed to keep the TSA on their toes, they reveal that imagining and staging security breaches has become a national preoccupation and an obsessive management ritual.

Besides being subject to covert operations, each day on the job airport screeners are posted at the x-ray monitor, they must decipher between "real" and "fake" threats. The Threat Image Projection (or TIPS) program, which is used at all airports, arbitrarily superimposes simulated images of contraband, bombs, and other dangerous materials on x-ray images of innocent passengers' carry-on bags as they pass through the machine. There is an archive of 4000 images that can be randomly and automatically inserted. As one systems manufacturer, Rapiscan Systems explains, "an 'escape' is recorded if the checkpoint operator does not respond to the virtual threat projection within the allotted time period." (Rapiscan, 2006a) In some cases, TIPS has caused enormous confusion. A *Seattle Times* investigation found numerous incidents in which threat images were identified by screeners, but bags "escaped" without being physically searched and thus entire terminals filled with passengers had to be evacuated and re-screened. ("Airport Insecurity," 2004)

Not only is there a strong likelihood, according to statistics, that a TSA worker will be injured on the job, but such operations constitute a kind of stateside psy–ops – that is, psychological operations that are designed to generate profound confusion among federal employees and passengers about the status of "the real" at the very moment when deciphering it could be a matter of life or death. The checkpoint is used to stage the state's struggle to define, test and regulate the shape-shifting form of the security threat. TSA workers are paid to partake in a state-sponsored guessing game orchestrated by security experts and the managerial class who concoct all kinds of potential violations which TSA workers on the frontlines are charged day after day to detect. Even though each day dangerous objects pass through without incident and each day actual attacks are imagined that are not carried out, the state-led trickery, gaming, and managed chaos at the checkpoint is likely to normalize a fundamental skepticism about the status of all people and things for travelers and workers alike.

Close Sensing

In addition to articulating a new regime of labor relations, the airport checkpoint exposes new technologies of sensing, scanning and detection. Collectively, these techniques might be referred to as close sensing – a set of practices that serve as the counterpoint to what I have explored elsewhere as satellite remote sensing (Parks, 2005, 74-107) in that they are oriented toward the minute and the personal rather than the geographic and panoramic perspectives of the earth's surface. Close sensing involves the use of magnetometers, x-ray machines and trace sensing devices to scrutinize personal belongings and their fragments, the body and its interior. In this sense, close sensing is as an extension of the kinds of practices Lisa Cartwright (1995) discusses in her history of medical imaging where film, x-ray and other technologies combined with scientific and popular imaginaries to make the body visible in new ways. What distinguishes close sensing from other forms of surveillance is the authority the state has granted to supplement machine vision with touch. According to TSA guidelines, all belongings or bodies that are handled must be scanned with a machine first. TSA workers rely on so-called "screener assistant technologies" such as "Target," that use software algorithms to search x-ray images for dangerous materials – "the algorithm analyzes the mass, size, and atomic number of items in the image against preset thresholds, objects that match the defined criteria are identified for the operator." (Rapiscan, 2006b) TSA screeners also use image-processing programs with names like Crystal Clear, which can zoom in for a closer view and/or perform organic-inorganic stripping. The function of the checkpoint machine, then, is to direct the TSA agent to apply his/her manual labor to specific bodies and objects that pass through the gate. It is impossible, then, to separate the visual search from acts of handling, which are often conducted with conspicuous blue latex gloves, the iconic signature of the TSA. To foreground their manual interventions, TSA workers also leave "notices of baggage inspection" in checked luggage that is physically searched.

This tactile supplement to what Paul Virilio would call "eyeless vision" (1989: 3) has transformed the checkpoint into a physically charged locale in which passengers hurriedly strip off layers of clothes, remove their shoes and empty out their pockets to avoid further inspection. These acts of disrobing, which used to occur in the bedroom, are now performed while in transit and in full view, not only in front of TSA agents, but other passengers as well, so that gender and sexuality are repeatedly invoked as sites for the assertion of authority. The physical search has aroused much controversy as thousands of complaints have been filed with the TSA and discussions abound in the press. There have been letters to newspaper editors and articles re-telling stories about TSA screeners looking down the back of women's pants, cupping their breasts, or groping body parts during physical searches. More aggressive pat down policies were implemented in September 2004 after two Chechen women carrying explosives allegedly caused two plane crashes in Russia. (Goo, 2004) TSA officers were instructed to perform more intrusive pat downs and to look for "irregularities in a person's natural shape or contour." One woman reported having her breasts touched as the TSA agent loudly asked, "Are those real!?" The agency received 250 formal complaints in the month after the policy went into effect. (Associated Press, 2004c)

A controversy has also bloomed around the use of so called "x-rated x-rays" or backscatter machines that use high energy x-rays and allow screeners to see through passengers' clothes and detect some one that might be carrying a gun or bomb (Sharkey, 2005). The machines cost from

$100-200,000 a piece and are also the kind of devices used to screen South African diamond miners going home at the end of a workday. There are concerns not only about this high visibility of the body that renders breasts and genitalia in detail, but also about exposure to high levels of radiation. The Electronic Privacy Information Center and ACLU argue backscatter inspection constitutes a major privacy invasion and should be banned since it "compels passengers to submit themselves to a level of bodily exposure that almost everyone would consider is indecent and many find religiously or ethically offensive." (EPIC, 2005) Nevertheless, backscatter machines have already been implemented in Baltimore/Washington, Dallas/Fort Worth, Jacksonville, Florida, Phoenix, San Francisco and London Heathrow). To encourage the public to accept the cee, in 2003 the director of the TSA security laboratory, Susan Hallowell, strolled through a backscatter machine to demonstrate its efficacy in detecting the gun and bomb she had hidden under her clothes. Trying to minimize the issue of privacy encroachment, she suggested the only problem is that "it makes you look fat and naked." (Miller, 2003) The TSA has used the high volume of women's complaints regarding physical searches to legitimate the use of these backscatter machines, claiming they perform a "virtual search" and will make pat downs unnecessary.

Media scholars Laura Marks (2002) and Margaret Morse (1998) have referred to the relation between looking and tactility as haptic visuality, where the eye functions as an organ of touch. They both develop the concept primarily in relation to experimental media art and minority media. As Marks explains, "Haptic visuality, a term contrasted to optical visuality, draws from other forms of sense experience, primarily touch and kinesthetics." (2002: 2) She invokes the haptic to critique post-Enlightenment rationality and its privileging of distant and detached modes of observation and sets out to "restore a flow between the haptic and the optical that our culture is currently lacking [and] to explore how a haptic approach might rematerialize our objects of perception." (2002: xiii) While airport screening practices structure continuities between looking and touching, they do so not to generate multi-sensory aesthetics and criticism, but rather to perform a security function for the state. In this way, the close sensing that occurs at the checkpoint shares more in common with medical imaging and diagnostics since it involves the machine's identification of potentially dangerous objects that are then inspected with workers' hands and either contained or eliminated.

The institutionalization of close sensing at checkpoints in the US and abroad means that there are now more people in the world whose bodies and belongings have been scanned by machines and touched by workers than ever before. It is it is important to note, however, that those who are most closely sensed are not necessarily screened by closed circuit monitors, but are taken behind closed doors. Makeshift rooms exist for more intensive inspections and these spaces are cordoned off beyond public view. The visual is given over to the haptic, the tactile. In one sense, the checkpoint is a more protected place in terms of civil liberties because of the over-exposures that it affords, yet it also functions as a system for selecting or filtering those who are subject to even closer scrutiny where seeing not only becomes touching but may become torture. Therefore we cannot separate the practice of stateside close sensing at the airport checkpoint from the more excessive and violent versions of scrutiny and interrogation that have emerged in the midst of the US-led war on global terror. In some cases individuals have been apprehended and rushed through airport security gates only to be put on CIA "torture flights." In December 2005 new stories broke about hundreds of CIA flights that have funneled Islamist terror suspects to from Europe and the US to the Middle East. (Taylor, 2005; Goodman, 2004; Hirsch, et al, 2005) Close sensing, then, involves the hand-eye coordination of state power and may be articulated at checkpoints or in mid air and may be applied to different bodies and to varying degrees. Its most extreme version may be in Abu Graib prison or Guantanamo Bay where detainees have been subject to the same kinds of scanning, imaging, profiling techniques and then brutally tortured and photographed. Airport screening practices might be understood as symptomatic, then, of a broader security regime in which looking authorizes touching and touching can become torture. Haptic visuality may therefore take on dangerous dimensions when it is articulated by a vengeful state.

Closed Circuits and Sharp Edges

Developing a textual or semiotic approach to study close sensing is a difficult proposition since civilians are not allowed to stand near or behind the x-ray machines at check points. Using simulations, however, it is possible to imagine and delineate the visual form of the x-ray screening strip – the sequence of x-ray images that represents personal affects as they pass on a conveyor belt whose rhythms and densities are shaped by flight schedules, the work week, holidays, machine speeds, and TSA staffing. An MSNBC website gives us a sense of this visual form as it features a two minute interactive simulation, inviting the user to identify various threat images that appear including a gun, knife and explosives while passengers tell you to hurry up. Like an airport screener the user can pause and zoom in/out on the image or turn it from black and white into a color version that differentiates organic and inorganic matter. The closed circuit monitor delivers a slide show of personal belongings splayed open by x-rays for the eyes of the operator(s). When I tried the simulation myself I was overwhelmed by how difficult it was and was struck by the odd application of such a high stakes gaze to a stream of ordinary objects Purses, briefcases and backpacks rapidly pass by, containing objects such as pill bottles coins keys and cell phones, but there are also knives guns and explosives that the screener is tasked to recognize As the screener-in-training inspects the materials that pass the voices of angry passengers can be heard on the soundtrack yelling, This is taking for ever!" "My grandma could do a faster job than that! or "Come on, I don't have all day!" In two minutes I screened 22 bags 9 of which contained threats I identified 77% of them correctly, earning a 'C,' and was warned at the end of my session "Letting even one threat by would get a fully trained screener fired' Given the sheer volume of objects to be scanned it is not surprising that forbidden items sometimes pass through the gate unnoticed No matter how diligent and well-trained the TSA staff the labor of searching for something is hard work and the eyes tire when faced with a never-ending display of things to examine When passing through checkpoints myself I've observed how these screens are monitored and I have seen 2-3 workers cloistered around them at times and one person falling asleep at others, a testament perhaps to the condition of high alert banality that characterizes this visual form

Whatever the case, the checkpoint x-ray machine generates the most dense object-oriented visual economy we have seen yet, resonating with what Jonathan Beller has called the cinematic mode of production "Cinema," he suggests, "refers not only to what one sees on the screen or even to the institutions and apparatuses which generate film but to the totality of relations which generates the myriad appearances of the world Cinema means the production of instrumental images through the organization of animated materials These materials include everything from actors, to landscapes, to populations to widgets, to fighter planes to electrons Cinema is a material practice of global scope, the movement of capital in, through, as image' (2002 67) While one could argue that the airport x-ray machine is not exactly cinematic, I am intrigued by Beller's provocatively totalizing account of the cinema (or audio-visuality) because it relates I think to the way airport x-ray sequences expose the steady pace of capital accumulation What appear on the monitors are the faint traces of consumer goods at once being protected and scrutinized as potentially dangerous objects The x-ray machine generates a spectral slideshow of 21st century consumerism, so that it becomes a gothic cousin to the television commercial manifesting the trace of already bought and used commodities moving through the world As belongings pass across the conveyor belt they pivot somewhere between possession and loss safety and danger significance and oblivion Akira Lippit suggests that the x-ray provides a visual registration of invisibility explaining "X-rays record only the shadows of a secret, its trace the place where it hides Not so much an exposure as a disclosure the X-ray reveals secret visibility as a mode of secret visuality, showing what nonetheless remains invisible, without operation or accident "(2005 32) In the case of airport screening the x-ray may disclose that lurking within capital accumulation are disastrous threats to its future Each x-rayed object becomes a reminder that the capacity to see to consume and to move might not last

While each object is x-rayed individually the unending collection of objects x-rayed produces a broader inventory of the things we think we need to have with us—currency identification cards, eyeglasses umbrellas, snacks pills, diapers, tampons baby strollers makeup, cigarettes, laptops ipods, cell phones shoes, water documents magazines jewelry, and so on – the accoutrements of travel When all of our personal things are reduced to transparencies, they are not just objects to be looked at, they become symptomatic of a more permeating gaze in which the state not only reserves the right to touch what it sees, but also uses its visual capital to temporarily evacuate the vitality or materiality of objects as part of the process of trying to reduce or eliminate threats to its own future Put another way the closed circuit x-ray sequence is symptomatic of the state's increasing inability to control and regulate the flow of matter in general whether weapons, drugs currency consumer goods and/or natural resources in the context of globalization [2] Upon the conveyor belts of airport screening checkpoints then there is a larger drama unfolding about the unstable position of state not only in a war on global terror but in a world of uncertain materialities, mutable things, and camouflaged objects where a cell phone can be a gun, a lipstick can be a knife a teddy bear can carry a weapon, a condom can be a vessel for drug-running and a shoe can be a ticking time bomb

Consider some of the objects that have been confiscated at TSA gates in the US A knife disguised as a lipstick A handgun inserted inside a radio A teddy bear with its backside slashed open with no indication as to what was inside Between 2002 and 2005 the TSA confiscated 18 million objects (Novotny 2005) After these objects are taken away from passengers, they are sorted and auctioned in bulk to the public at government warehouses Not surprisingly some of these confiscated materials now re-circulate through the web-based economy When I searched E-bay in early 2006 I found 138 entries for TSA seized knives scissors nail clippers corkscrews, wrenches and pliers One person describes an "NTSA lot of 8 pounds of scissors" indicating 'most are made in China Japan and Korea' reminding us of the broader global economy from which they emerge Another describes a "crappy bag of old scissors' as "airport seizure property," suggesting its history of confiscation gives it added value Indeed, it was just such a descriptor that prompted me to buy a TSA-confiscated pocketknife for $5.00 The knife was manufactured in Germany sold to some one who ended up in a US airport after September 11 2001 was intercepted by the TSA, sold again at a US government auction to second-hand dealers in Las Vegas, who then sold the knife to me on E-bay

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[2] For an interesting take on this issue see Moses Naím *Illicit How Smugglers Traffickers and Copycats are Hijacking the Global Economy* New York Double Day 2005

The transit history of this object alone is suggestive of the odd economies of re-distribution that have emerged as a side effect of the war on terror.

So what do we make of the TSA's interception and recirculation of our sharp edges? The events of 9/11 enabled a scenario to emerge in which US political and security officials could believe in and promote the idea that sharp edges in mid air were more threatening than anything else, more threatening than a reckless leader in the white house, more threatening that a US foreign policy determined by unilateralism, more threatening than a global economy contingent upon the ebbs and flows of oil. This idea persists. Just recently a US congressional leader spiritedly introduced federal legislation called the "Leave All Blades Behind Act." Yet we all know that one person's fist can be just as deadly as another's knife. And anyone could turn a handful of coins and an empty sock into something that could wreak havoc. Simply put, if the soft spot in the US security system is the sharp knife wielded in midair, then the airport checkpoint exposes the US government's willful blindness to the current state of global affairs.

Unending Turbulence

In this essay, I have treated the checkpoint as a discursive space where we can detect shifts in biopower in the context of a changing world political order. I have suggested that TSA procedures have produced problematic working conditions for federal employees who are breaking their backs while trying to keep knives out of the air, generated a new regime of inspection where looking becomes continuous with touching/handling/manipulation, and, finally, revealed changes in the representation of material objects where what may ultimately be seen is the state's struggle to control capital accumulation and circulation. At the airport checkpoint, security involves everything from screeners' back muscles to secret agents' breach scenarios, from trace detection devices to x-rayed pocketknives, from blue latex gloves to CIA torture flights. Much more than a non-place, the airport has become a vital place where security, technology and capital collide and spur the US social body to recognize its terrorizing interiority.

The turbulence caused by new airport screening practices continues. As I was finishing this essay, the TSA announced a new policy banning liquids and gels on all flights to and from the U.S. This policy was based on an alleged terrorist plot to embed bombs in ordinary objects that would be carried on planes to the U.S. leaving from England. This meant that passengers now not only had to leave their blades behind, but their bottled water, toothpaste, lotion, eye drops, and cough syrup as well. During the months of August and September 2006 airport screeners' trash bins toppled over with containers full of liquid and gel as perturbed passengers reluctantly complied with the abruptly implemented rules. At the Frankfurt airport in August 2006 I asked the head airport screener whether I could take a photo of the abandoned objects pouring out of the trashcan behind her and was told I would have to get written permission from the Bavarian government to do so. No object is un-threatening in the war on global terror – whether me, my camera or the deodorant, hairspray or lipstick that lay in the trash. As of October 2006 the TSA carry-on regulations had changed yet again and sandwich-sized Ziploc bags filled with 3 oz. containers of liquids and gels were allowed. Bottled water could be taken onboard as long as it was purchased beyond the checkpoint. There is a price to pay for secure commodities – in my case, it was $2.50 for a safe sip of water in mid-air. At Los Angeles International airport in October 2006 TSA staff ordered me to throw my $1.00 bottle of water in the trash and told me not to worry because I could purchase one for $3.50 just beyond the checkpoint. Thus whether water or oil, the cost of security is embedded in the exchange value of the commodities we consume. As much as airport screening may isolate dangerous objects, it also exposes the collisions of capital, media and security that increasingly punctuate our lives.

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058-069

Live Tracking*

Hasan Elahi
Sandra Braman

* American artist Hasan Elahi here relates his experience of detention and interrogation, the impetus of his "Tracking Transience" project, which attempts to render his data-body visible. Guest editor Lane Hall invited communications policy expert Sandra Braman to comment upon Elahi's story.

Hasan's Story

It all started back in June of 2002 at the airport in Detroit as I was returning home from overseas [1] I realized when I handed my passport to the Immigration agent that something wasn't right After he slid the passport through the reader, he froze [2] [3] I asked "Is there something wrong?" but did not get any response from him After a few moments, which seemed an eternity he got up and said follow me please I ended up at the INS detention office at the Detroit airport [4] It was a large room filled with foreign looking people from all corners of the earth and you could clearly see the fear in their faces as this was their first day in the United States Things were not going well for them

There is usually very little overlap between INS and American citizens [5] I tried to start up a conversation with one of the guards by asking him why I was there He was just as confused as I was Eventually, a man in a dark suit approached me and said "I expected you to be older I had no idea what he was talking about I asked him to explain what was happening and he responded, "Well you have some explaining to do yourself!" [6] We then entered an interrogation room barren and stark white with a camera in the corner There was an L-shaped desk with a computer on it and a man in the dark suit sitting across from me I noticed that the screen saver on the monitor had a rather large and official looking circular symbol that read "Department of Justice" across the top and Federal Bureau of Investigation" across the bottom [7] I still didn't know what was happening, but realized that this was some type of government law enforcement officer and I was a suspect in something

His questions began

"Where were you?"

"Amsterdam," I replied

Before that?"

I had a change of planes in Lisbon"

"Where were you before that?"

"I was in Faro on the beach for a few days "

"And before that?"

"I was in Germany to see an art exhibition

"And before that?"

I was in Paris My university runs a summer program there and I went to visit

At this point he sounded a bit agitated It occurred to me that he expected to hear me mention countries such as Iraq, Libya Lebanon or some other expected locations dotting the axis of evil

"And where were you before that?"

"In Dakar In Senegal "

"Where's that?" he asked in a confused tone

In West Africa" I said as I went into my academic mode and drew a little map of Africa on the table with my finger and explained a bit about the historical significance of the westernmost tip of the African continent

"They Muslim there?"

"Yes, about 90% of the population is Muslim "

"What were you doing there?"

"I'm an artist and had an exhibition there "

"What kind of art you make?"

I have a hard time explaining this question to other artists much less government officials interrogating me I said that I was a sculptor and left it as just that [8]

"So who pays for your trips?"

"Sometimes the university that I work for Sometimes the place that invites me and sometimes just frequent flyer miles "

Where do you stay on these trips?"

"It usually depends on who pays for it but often some cheap hotel"

"Who do you meet on these trips?"

Sandra's Response

1) Note the date Less than a year after 9/11, about 7 months from passage of the USA PATRIOT Act But over 10 years since development of the 'new security theory" and its implementation provisions which provided much of the substance of the USA PATRIOT Act

2) Notice that the "subject' himself isn't aware of any reason why something might be amiss until the border agent freezes It used to be that action was required in order to be deemed a subject of suspicion or guilty of criminality Now, at least in matters related to terrorism it's "alleged intent' Hasan could not have had such intent if he only realized something had gone wrong at this point

3) Guess there's not a lot of experience here or the guy wouldn't have frozen He'd have smoothly moved into the next steps Perhaps he himself questioned the appropriateness of what he had been instructed to do, and had been hoping that he wouldn't confront the situation

4) You can't be forced to speak with law enforcement officials, you must consent to do so But the decision to travel internationally and cross the border is understood to be such consent so at this point Hasan had no choice

5) Love Hasan's understatement here Unfortunately with the legal changes that have taken place since 9/11 – that go far beyond the USA PATRIOT Act itself – there is a new category of citizenship in which it is possible to be considered a hybrid citizen A hybrid citizen is someone who is (or was) technically a U S citizen but who has lost some of the legal protections that identity provides as a result of having communicated with or interacted with individuals who are foreign nationals and who may themselves be suspect for some reason

6) Here is when we expect Samuel Beckett to step in

7) Note that the first ID of anyone, other than the border guard who was in a spatially and visually defined role when encountered is on a screen

8) I once had a border guard burst out laughing and make fun of me when I told him what I did Well it distracted him from everything else

Well mainly other artists journalists and people involved in the business of art"

At this point, out of nowhere he asked

"Where were you September 12?

Fortunately, I'm rather obsessive about my record keeping in general and had my Palm PDA with me I proceeded to look up Wednesday September 12 2001 on my calendar [9] I read him the contents ' Pay storage rent at 10 00 Meeting with Judith at 10 30 Intro Class from 12 00 to 3 00 and Advanced Class from 3 00 to 6 00 So according to this information, I must have been in Tampa "

"Where were you September 11?"

'I'm assuming the same place, but let's look that up as well I had a meeting at 2 00 pm with my department chair but I think this was cancelled "

"Where were you September 10?'

"Meeting with Jacquie at 10 00 Class from 12 00 to 6 00 '

"Where were you September 9? '

"I was probably driving back from Houston I had an exhibition there a few days before and spent pretty much the entire week before setting it up"

He didn't seem to expect someone to answer with this much detail and proceeded to the next topic

'You had a storage unit in Tampa right?"

"Yes near the university "

"What did you have in it?

Boxes of winter clothes furniture that didn't fit in my apartment, some assorted art materials, a lot of general junk"

"No explosives? '

No, I'm certain I didn't have any explosives '

Well we received a report that you had explosives and had fled on September 12th" [10]

In the end I was finally able to convince him that I certainly didn't have any explosives and since I had just returned to Tampa after missing nearly a week of school, I had much more important things to do than to move out of a storage space It turned out that after we examined my calendar for September of 2001 I most likely moved out of my storage space on the dates of September 22nd and September 26th as there were entries titled "Hector/Studio Move ' at 5 30 pm and ' Move Studio" at 6 00 pm on those dates I think by this point he realized that the report he was relying on was merely redneck paranoia [11] Not only was I quite cooperative but I also had meticulous records that documented my actions At this point, the tone of the interrogation drastically changed into more of a casual conversation and I ended up showing him all the digital pictures that I took on my trip [12] He finally finished by saying that he had enough information and that he would be forwarding this to the Tampa office since they initiated the file and they would be contacting me to clear this up Finally he gave me his card and asked me to call him if I wanted to go for a beer next time I was in Detroit I thought this was extremely odd after what had just happened, but felt that the incident was over [13]

A few weeks later, my office phone rang and a man introduced himself and said that he wanted to speak to me in regard to my interview in Detroit Arriving at the Federal Building was an adventure in itself As soon as I turned the corner and crossed Zack Street in front of the building in Downtown Tampa a man in a dark green suit and dark glasses recognized me and said to me "Please wait there," pointing to the curb [14] He was about 10 or 12 steps away I found this to be a very uncomfortable distance in that he could see clearly everything I was doing but no conversation was possible [15] While he rambled away on two mobile phones [16] I waited by the road The only thing going through my mind was that some van would pull up and abduct me and take me off somewhere never to return [17] It was probably only about 5 minutes later though it felt like an eternity when he yelled something that resembled [18] "You may approach!" [19] The lobby of the building was filled with security equipment and it was clear that these people guarding the door were not typical security guards They were Federal Marshals One of them, a stocky, bald, mean-looking guy clearly of northern European descent, approached me and started yelling at me in Arabic! It startled me a bit, but I kept enough composure to tell him that I didn't speak any Arabic and I had no idea what he was saying He completely dismissed anything I said and continued in Arabic After giving him several confused looks I think I said something like, "Do you mind speaking to me in English? I know you speak English!" [20] At this point the guy in the dark green suit with the two phones stopped the action and took me into an elevator and up to the 6th floor of the building

We entered an interrogation room Off to one side sat a large imposing man with close-cropped hair I eventually realized that this was an FBI agent and the person that I had been dealing with earlier in the day on the phone was a Deputy Marshal with the Justice Department The questions began as if I was in a court State your name date of birth occupation I remember being asked a lot of mundane and trivial questions by the Deputy Marshal who was reading from a list He seemed to be expecting short one-line answers though like a typical Academic I was offering long drawn-out essays complete with background information

9) Constitutionally, the United States was set up so that there was mutual transparency between citizens and the government Today, that has been lost – the government knows more and more about citizens while citizens know less and less about the government

10) However, the requirement that the U S government actually act on factual information when it targets an individual for surveillance has been dropped At least this is explicitly now the case for the FBI

11) Which segments of the population are actually the most paranoid today?

12) This conversation would be interesting as a film script including the multiple and rapid shifts of genre and camera angle

13) Good cop, bad cop in one person Same thing with looking at the photos on your camera – might you show or tell him something unwittingly in a seemingly social setting that you would not reveal during what is being experienced as interrogation?

14) Face recognition? Reportedly still generates 15% false positives

15) This sounds like about the distance from which one must stay from an ambassy in countries that are nervous

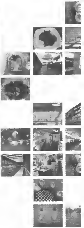
16) Nice image One in each hand, two on one ear one on a lapel and one in a shoe?

17) Either all comment or no comment No comment

18) The second time Hasan has commented that it felt as if time had stopped while he waited to understand what was going on, or be told what to do next

19) Sounds like royalty Or the spot in Red Square in Moscow where they have killed people since ancient times, which you aren't allowed to approach at all

20) We need a film-maker here!



[illegible] [21] He would begin reading his next question, only to realize that I had already answered it in my previous response. This game went on as the FBI agent watched quietly. One of them asked me whether I had witnessed any acts that might be detrimental to the interests of the U.S. or any other country. I started describing an incident that I witnessed in Chiapas where Zapatista peasants were protesting in the streets. Within one or two sentences, the FBI agent cut me off by saying, "We're not interested in indigenous people," and directly asked if I had ever met anyone from Al Qayda, Taliban, the Islamic Jihad, Hamas, Hizbollah, [22] and about half a dozen other groups that I had never even heard of before. He seemed to know remarkable little details such as the statue of the person that was at the entrance of the American University in Beirut, or routes in the region taken by regular buses as opposed to Hizbollah buses. It was clear that the extent of this agent's knowledge was far beyond anything I had previously dealt with. The things that he knew and the detail of knowledge frightened me. [23] Both men were very professional in their behavior during the entire process, but the power structure was quite clear. I could've contested the legality of the entire investigation and gotten a lawyer. [24] [25] However, I was afraid that such a response would only make things messier. It wasn't ever stated directly, but I realized that at any moment that they could take me to Guantanamo without any need for explanation. [26] Face to face with someone with that much power over my life, I reverted to survival mode. To survive was to cooperate. And I cooperated to the point where I told them literally everything. I didn't hold back anything during the course of the investigation. [27]

These questionings went on for the next six months and finally ended with a series of polygraph examinations. [28] The polygraphs took place in the same building as the other meetings, but on a different floor. The agent that administered the test was an older, rather quiet man who had been doing this work for many years. We started talking about why I was there in the first place. As he was shuffling through my file, he mentioned that I hadn't been traveling much lately. I wasn't going to ask how he knew, but I did bring up the point that I was scheduled to do a lecture in Indonesia the following month. He recommended that I not go. He felt it might further complicate things, as there had been a bombing in Bali the previous month. I made it clear to him that it wasn't a terrorist attack that I was fearful of. I was frightened by the possibility that one of his gung-ho colleagues might drag me off to Guantanamo, thinking in his mind and his heart that he was doing the right thing. He didn't really answer verbally, but gave me a look that said, "yeah, we have a few like that," and asked me if I carry my mobile phone while I travel. I told him that it didn't work overseas. He reminded me that the phone will work as soon as I entered the U.S, and gave me some numbers to call if I ever ran into any situations where I needed help. [29]

After our conversation, he proceeded with the polygraph exam. He was very clear about the process and how polygraphs work. To my surprise, he insisted that we "practice" the questions before hooking me up with the instrumentation. [30] They were not terribly difficult questions. All of them required a simple yes or no answer. If something was a maybe, or under certain circumstances, he would rephrase the question until it could be answered as a yes or no. [31] I think that questions such as "Is today Tuesday?" or "Is your name Hasan?" were control responses to compare with questions such as "Have you ever met with any person from an intelligence agency of a foreign nation?" or "Do you belong to any group that wishes to harm the United States?" I don't remember most of the other questions as I pretty much fell asleep and went into a strange hypnotic state while responding. [32] It was like being in an operating room, waiting to go into anesthesia. [33] During the process, I sat in a large and comfortable black chair, while facing a grey wall. I think it was a carpeted wall. There was a large machine behind me and behind that was a computer where the administering agent sat. The test was repeated nine times and took three hours to complete. [34] Finally, the other agent came into the room and told me that I had been cleared and everything was fine. I asked if I could have a letter from the FBI stating that I was cleared, but he insisted that everything was okay and that I should call him if I needed anything. After hearing about an upcoming trip, he suggested that I call him with the flight details and he would take care of all clearances.

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Between that time and December of 2004, I had no incidents at any US airport. In January of 2005 Homeland Security was realigned, and detentions began to happen. The CBP, the new and improved name for the old Customs and Immigration Department, now handles these, and they happen with some frequency. I'm not sure what aspect of it is truly new as I still notice the same people at the same airports. In any case, I'm sure that some government database somewhere got mixed up and the latest update to my files never took place. [35] So with a few rare exceptions, every time I enter the US, I get the "special" room. This generally takes between an hour and four hours depending on the airport. [36] It has become a part of daily life for me and I just have to make sure that I give myself several extra hours when scheduling a connecting flight. It is curious to me that I have no problems getting onto planes, just getting off of them and into my country. In general, the west coast airports like LAX and San Francisco take about an hour to clear. Detroit has been hit and miss, sometime an hour, sometimes 4 hours. JFK is definitely the worst as every single time I have arrived there, it has never taken less than 3 hours. So far, Honolulu and Newark have been the shortest gauntlets at around ten minutes. But then again in these easier cases, I've had my hair

21) Clarification as obfuscation, depending on the receiver (Style as weapon.)

22) None of whom, then, are considered by the U.S. government to be indigenous peoples?

23) And then the reversal regarding an academic-like knowledge?

24) Perhaps, but not necessarily. Under the USA PATRIOT Act, organizations that comply with requests for information are also under a gag order that requires them not to tell those surveilled that this is going on. In some cases, this has been interpreted as also meaning that lawyers should not be informed, though many organizations interpret this provision in such a way that at least attorneys can be informed.

25) News from security professionals is that if one calls an attorney at this point it changes the nature of the process from that point on, and the advice is that calling for that support is consequently a good idea.

26) Under the USA PATRIOT Act, someone charged with a crime on the basis of information gathered under surveillance made legal by the same statute need not be presented with the evidence being used against him or her – even in the courtroom.

27) We know from analysis of information gathering that ranges from verification of arms control agreements to witnesses in the courtroom that there is no such thing as "enough" information to make a given analysis unquestionably supported. In the end, will on the part of the analyst is necessary. Providing massive amounts of information can therefore be a highly effective defensive strategy.

28) It's quite interesting that the polygraph is still being used, since scientists regularly confirm that data obtained this way may not be reliable. It does remain effective theater, though.

29) This is the inexplicable heart of the story. What is the quid pro quo?

30) Speaking of theater.

31) Surely repetition changes one's physiological responses to a question?

32) Repetition of questions as a technique for hypnosis?

33) Hypnosis is also used as a technique for anesthesia.

34) This also sounds like a combination of techniques used by those in labor relations to see how long it takes someone to do a task (you may start out slow but ultimately speed up to your normal speed) – and the widely used psychological test, the MMPI (Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory), that is very long and includes repetitions on the assumption that you may lie once but you'll ultimately forget that you did, or what your lie was, and eventually tell the truth.

35) "Improvement" of data processing methods as a means of losing information.

36) Another way in which this experience has affected Hasan's sense – and experience – of time.

bleached out and that has played a big factor in whether I get taken to the special room or not. [37] It's a rather unscientific theory, but with my new bleached hair, there has been only one detention.

All this has led me to the birth of my recent project, Tracking Transience, where I am voluntarily developing a network device which makes public almost every aspect of my life. I have actively decided to cooperate with the FBI to a point where we have become unauthorized collaborative authors of the work. [38]

This device generates a database of imagery and locative information that in combination with a web-enabled companion tracks me and my points of transit. Not only can the FBI look me up and track me, but so can anyone else. Currently, the device, which is in constant development, uploads to my server images tagged with exact GPS coordinates. The server then sends the GPS tags to USGS, which returns an aerial surveillance image of my precise location. My server then compiles this map with my uploaded image and thumbnails of related images into a web-based file which is then accessed through any computer with net access. These uploads are currently done manually with an average increment of once every half hour when I am inside the US. [39] Outside the US, while uploads are available, they are a little less frequent. Some of the maps aren't terribly detailed as many countries are less than thrilled to have detailed satellite imagery of their country available for all foreigners to see. Fortunately, as phone technologies between US and international countries become more compatible with each other and the technologies of surveillance advance quicker than legislative bodies understand them, the device and associated data are becoming more international. [40]

Transparency and the volunteering of information is crucial in the success of this project. During the investigation, I have told the FBI just about everything about me. Since then I've decided to time-stamp my life on regular intervals and in the process create a type of a paper trail that clearly shows that I couldn't have possibly been involved in terrorist attacks. This statistical and pictorial information is cataloged in separate databases. To make sense of it, you have to do some detective work, not unlike the process the FBI went through to construct their case against me. In the end, if you took the time to cross-reference all the databases, you'd perhaps know every little detail about me, down to where and what I eat regularly, where I'm flying to and from, where I'm sleeping, where I'm spending my money, even which urinals I'm using. At first, it might seems like a lot of useless information, but intelligence agencies, such as the FBI, CIA, NSA, or others, all operate in an industry where the main commodity is information and secrecy and restricted access are integral to the power dynamics. Obviously, I have an FBI file on me, but the chances of anyone accessing it, including myself, are slim given that the magic wand of "National Security" was waved over the investigation. So, I started thinking questions such as: What might they actually know about me? Why should the FBI be the only ones to know these things about me? What if I simply volunteer every bit of information regarding every aspect of my life to anyone and everyone? [41]

By borrowing a very simple economic principle, I'm flooding a market to a point where the currency of the Intelligence Agencies is devalued because everyone already knows everything that they attempt to keep secret. In the end, I want to make every detail about myself completely transparent. My intention is to clearly demonstrates how invasive the new USA Homeland Security and Patriot Act laws are. [42] Using the powers of the web and technologies originally intended for military and surveillance use, I hope to bring to light the political ramifications of such policies and their repercussions on an individual level, using myself as subject.

37) I guess Hasan has confounded the facial recognition software!

38) But implicitly invited – whether they were aware of it or not

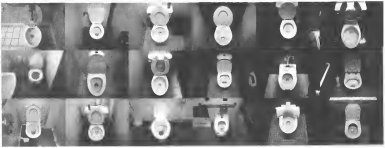
39) Can we get a photograph of Hasan doing this? There are ethnographic and behavioral dimensions of this We have been thinking of information ecologies in terms of the information (and sources of information) with which we surround ourselves but Hasan teaches us to expand that concept to include the information about ourselves that we export The globalized personal information ecology!

40) Documentation of this history as it becomes internationalized would be highly informative No one has looked at the difference between the technological horizon (what theoretically can be done) and the technological reality from this perspective

41) After the Berlin Wall came down, there was great interest in opening up the Stasi files – the information so assiduously gathered, often from "volunteers" among the citizenry, by the Secret Service in the former East Germany Those files in fact were opened up only to be closed again relatively soon out of respect for it was said "data privacy"

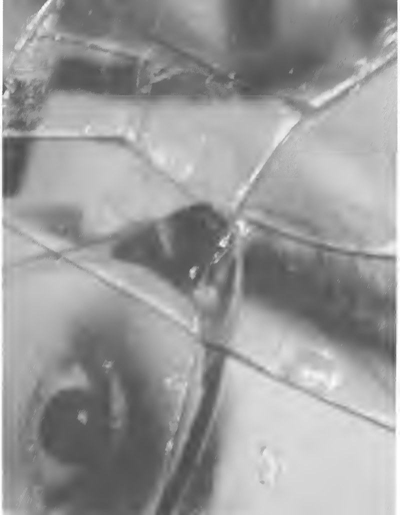
42) A whole suite of other statutes regulations, and changes in interpretation and implementation of the law combines to yield the environment being described

Artist as the one who goes ahead, artist as canary in the mines, artist as the eye that looks back



070-077

Taking Liberties



072-081

Something's Missing

Melanie Mariño

In a performance for the 49th Venice Biennale in 2001, the artist Santiago Sierra paid street vendors of fake designer bags to have their dark hair dyed blond for a price of 120,000 lire (approximately $60). The newly bleached hair of transplants from Southern Italy as well as immigrants from Senegal, China, and Bangladesh drew attention to their presence in the city where they work, while foregrounding their routine exclusion from the opening events that biennially transmute international art exhibition into congested spectacle. Sierra also gave his allocated exhibition space inside the Arsenale to a handful of vendors, who used it to sell their wares on a groundsheet just as they would outside the building's per meter. Rather than aggressively hawking their goods, the Arsenale performers were remarkably restrained, not unlike their audience, who were met head-on with the racial and class hierarchies bracketed by such art events as well as the commerce that structures artistic reception as product consumption.

This performance alludes first of all to the history of its architectural container—the Arsenale dockyard is emblematic of Venetian maritime power in the sixteenth-century. As such, the city's old mercantile and military movements might be seen to prefigure the ever-expanding circulation of goods and services under global capitalism. Within the cultural sphere, the nomadic logic of capital has also expressed itself as the rise of international biennialism. If the transnational circuitry of the large-scale art exhibition encompasses previously neglected subjects, it also absorbs their local and regional specificities into an impossibly achronic vision of a unified world culture. Sierra's action, of course, suggests that the privilege of visibility comes at a price, that the twinning of market expansion and cultural inclusion only elides the socio-economic stratifications that have always organized the exhibition of art. Sierra's performance, in this sense, links the razing of geo-political differences to the multiplication of the oppressive relations of exchange that support the uneven distribution of power between the center and the periphery.

Nonetheless, something's missing. In a conversation with Theodor Adorno in 1964, Ernst Bloch borrowed this phrase from Bertolt Brecht to spur us to return to utopian thought. In their discussion Adorno proposed, "whatever can be imagined as utopia, this is the transformation of the totality. And the imagination of such a transformation of the totality is basically very different in all the so-called utopian accomplishments—which, incidentally, are all really like you say, very modest, very narrow. It seems to me that what people have lost subjectively in regard to consciousness is very simply the capability to imagine the totality as something that could be completely different."[1] Adorno maintained that the imagination of utopia could never be cast as a positive or a whole picture, but Bloch elaborated, "If it is not allowed to be cast in a picture, then I shall portray it as in the process of being. But one should not be allowed to eliminate it as if it really did not exist."[2] Has "something" been evacuated from Sierra's performances? Does there remain a place for this no place?

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Born in Madrid in 1966, Sierra has been resident in Mexico City since 1996, where he began to contract individuals from the most marginalized sectors of the city as the basis of his performances. Working in different cities throughout the world, the artist has hired unemployed day laborers and undocumented guest workers as well as actors, drug addicts, and prostitutes to perform monotonous, repetitive, and abject tasks—ranging from masturbation and construction to standing still, holding up walls, sitting inside boxes or holes. The parameters of each "system" are specified with a precise statement of dimensions, number of people, time of labor, and amount of wages, and the event is documented with perfunctory black-and-white photographs or videos.

Take, for instance, *Person Paid To Have 30 cm Line Tatooed On Them*. Staged on Regina Street in Mexico City in May 1998, this performance represents the first time that Sierra employed an actual human body as a trade good. The artist precisely delineated the context of this action as following: "I looked for a person who did not have any tattoos or intentions of having one, who, as he needed the money, agreed to have a mark on his skin for life. He was paid fifty dollars."

Or, consider a larger-scale example. For *465 Remunerated Persons*, which took place at the Museo Rufino Tamayo in October 1999, the artist asked a casting agency for 465 males of mixed American Indian and Caucasian race between the ages of 30 and 40 and between 160 and 170 cm in height. According to the artist, he then selected those actors that personified the so-called "working-class type," who, in size and appearance, were comparable to the custodial workers of Chapultepec Park where the museum is located. These performers were then required to stand still in a grid formation of five men per cubic meter for three hours during the opening of the exhibition.

465 Remunerated Persons captures the complex spatial dynamics that thread Mexico City's informal service economies through its elite cultural spaces. Under normal conditions, the museum workers would have been rendered invisible. Their visual representation as a mass entity in this performance, however, stymied the audience's free physical circulation through the exhibition space, confronting them psychologically with the discomfiting presence of a lower social class of maintenance workers

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[1] "Something's Missing: A Discussion between Ernst Bloch and Theodor W. Adorno on the Contradictions of Utopian Longing," in Ernst Bloch, *The Utopian Function of Art and Literature: Selected Essays*, trans. Jack Zipes and Frank Mecklenburg (MIT Press, 1996), p. 3–4.

[2] Ibid., p. 4.

As Coco Fusco so aptly put it, Sierra "recast a minimalist inquiry into the relation between the viewer and the mass as an investigation into the relation between viewers and 'the masses '"[3]

Minimal art as is well known, expanded the field of sculpture by inserting the autonomous art object within the viewer s grip so that "one is more aware than before that he himself is establishing relationships as he apprehends the object from various conditions and under varying conditions of light and spatial context "[4] Within this expanded field, the viewer is asked to articulate his or her body's relationship not only to the given object but to the space it shares with that object The horizon of the work of art then shifts in relation to the viewer's ambient body with the topology of changing perspectives drawing into focus the ' equivalence between the orientation of the visual field and the awareness of one s own body as the potentiality of that field "[5]

For an entire generation of artists in the 1960s Maurice Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception* offered the terms for the reorientation of perception around the viewer s lived corporeity As the phenomenological model opened art to its context, inaugurating the investigation of the public character of aesthetic experience it continued to presume a certain neutrality the viewer was universal the body generic, and the site of art s encounter equally abstract It was, of course, this hermetic tendency that the critical followers of Minimal art would go on to challenge As Sierra once confessed, ' I find myself in the same situation as many others, who see Minimalism as an arsenal of instruments they can make use of but whose emptiness they cannot bear "[6]

Minimalism otherwise put prepared the analysis of art's perceptual conditions, enabling subsequent generations to probe the entanglement of the perceptual field with the conditions of language, of sexuality of power Consider Mierle Laderman Ukeles' *Maintenance Art Performances* (1973) where the sexed body is positioned within the art museum conceived as an ideological apparatus of display and distribution For this series Ukeles lived in the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford Connecticut and performed activities associated with domestic labor, which were then presented as a form of institutional maintenance—for instance, mopping the museum floors (*Hartford Wash Washing Tracks Maintenance Inside*) or cleaning the outside plaza and steps (*Hartford Wash Washing Tracks Maintenance Outside*) or spraying the glass vitrines that house art objects cases (*Transfer The Maintenance of the Art Object*) By opening the ordinarily hidden and devalued labor of daily maintenance to public view and reframing that action as artistic work, Ukeles drew on the domestic relations that structure the private sphere to rearticulate the boundaries that separate it from the public space delimited in this case by the institutions of art

Informed by such practices of institutional critique, Sierra's recast labor to update Minimal art with a guilt complex The artist s work mingles the language of Minimalism—of geometric cubes and lines and serial or non-hierarchical compositions—with the systematic prescription of tasks to index the otherwise imperceptible patterns of poverty and suffering in the global landscape As such, it functions as a powerful indictment of the complex material systems of economic expropriation that inflate the disparity in people s prices As the dollar-driven tourist economy of Cuba solicits the commodification of the body for example the heroin trade in Old San Juan, Puerto Rico invites its degradation

In Sierra s work, the body is inflected with the marks of class and race and the subject is constituted as a political actor who reproduces the relations of power localized within a given area Take the artist's performance for Ace Gallery in Mexico City in March 2000, for which Sierra hired an eleven year-old boy who usually cleaned shoes at a subway station to polish the shoes of gallery visitors Like Ukeles's *Maintenance Art Performances*, this action challenges the concealment of certain subjects and the occlusion of their labor Of course, the *Maintenance* performances hindered the smooth operation of the museum, the better to render the institution s affiliations with the patriarchal economy of capitalism and reorder the structural divisions of that system By contrast, Sierra s intervention embeds illegal child labor within the context of artistic consumption, and the viewer as a result, is implicated as an active collaborator in the exploitation of contemporary Mexico s underclass Crossing Mexico's neo-liberal privatization of the economy with the religious economy of Catholic martyrdom Sierra in effect reproduces self-immolation as the price of survival

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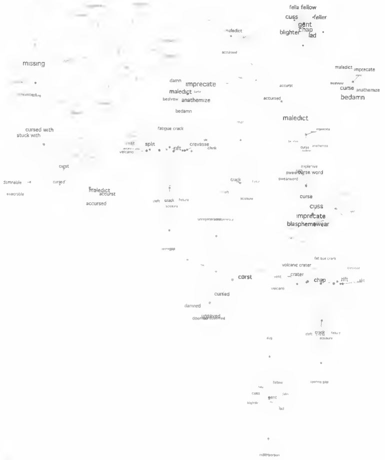
Sierra s performances convert the phenomenological template of reciprocity between object and viewer (or seer and seen) into a relation of economic exploitation that grimly exemplifies Marx's theory of the exchange value of labor As Marx argued, the labor time of the worker is less valuable within the economic system of capitalism than its subsequent exchange value in the form of the commodity produced by this labor The transaction of wage labor, as such, is grounded in an unequal relation of exchange between the worker and the capitalist The productive activity of the individual producer acquires value only when the product establishes itself within the realm of

[3] Coco Fusco "The Unbearable Weightiness of Being Art in Mexico After NAFTA " *Atlantica* 9 (Summer 2001) p 23

[4] Robert Morris "Notes on Sculpture in G Battcock (ed) *Minimal Art A Critical Anthology* (E P Dutton 1968) p 232

[5] Maurice Merleau-Ponty *Phenomenology of Perception* trans C Smith (Routledge 2002) p 239

[6] Santiago Sierra in interview with Gabriele Mackert in *Santiago Sierra* exh cat (Kunsthalle Vienna 2002) p 29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equivalent commodities—which is to say when it is abstracted from the specific human labor that produced it to become a generalized token of uneven exchange between one class and another

For Marx as the critic and curator Nicolas Bourriaud reminds us, art represents the "absolute merchandise" In his eponymous collection of texts from 1998, however, Bourriaud is careful to distinguish between the art object and artistic practice suggesting that the capitalist market economy in which the work of art circulates is not identical to the economy of art as such "art represents a barter activity that cannot be regulated by any currency "[7] As a type of barter, artistic production inhabits what Marx characterized as a "social interstice " where communities continue to trade within the general system of market capitalism while dodging its law of profit

"The artist's practice " Bourriaud argues "determines the relationship that will be struck up with his work In other words, what he produces, first and foremost, are relations between people and the world by way of aesthetic objects "[8] This argument is fueled by the neo-Marxist elements of French cultural theory in the 1960s—in particular by Louis Althusser's idea that culture as an "ideological state apparatus " does not merely reflect but in fact produces social relations In Bourriaud's theory, which was intended to capture the art of the 1990s, relational art is defined as "an art taking as its theoretical horizon the realm of human interactions and its social context, rather than the assertion of an independent and private symbolic space "[9] Here, aesthetic experience is conceived as a social process of dialogue and collaboration, which, in its turn mobilizes the collective identifications that might form the informal basis of temporary communities

Significantly, Bourriaud characterizes such interactions as "micro-utopian " The function of artistic practice, he elaborates, "is no longer to form imaginary and utopian realities but to actually be ways of living and models of action within the existing real " Relational aesthetics does not seek to change the existing social framework (for Bourriaud, this is a regressive illusion) but rather to articulate a critical, if provisional relation to dominant culture in the present Relationality signifies art's pointed engagement with the tectonic shifts wrought by the global information economy—for instance, by the emphasis on virtual networking over direct, physical communication, on service and management industries over industrial production, on global corporate culture over plural and local cultural differences

The forces of globalization and digitalization, as this all too familiar account goes, have only intensified the general reification of lived experience But this picture is far from total "through little services rendered, the artists fill in the cracks in the social bond " Throughout his book, Bourriaud offers numerous exemplars of relational commerce, inserted into the gaps of the prescribed "communication zones" of our network society Much of the time, this alternative interactivity pivots around the adjustment of art's exhibition and distribution formats Bourriaud cites for instance Rirkrit Tiravanija's mobile cafeterias—for his exhibition at 303 Gallery in New York in 1992 the New York-based Thai artist reconfigured the gallery's rooms into a makeshift kitchen and dining area where he would cook and serve Thai curries to visitors for free— and Philippe Parreno's party spaces—in 1995, the French artist opened the rooms of Le Consortium in Dijon, France to multiple party functions for an hour and forty-five minutes the day before the exhibition opening Like Tiravanija's free meals, the object offerings of Felix Gonzalez-Torres (of stacks of paper and piles of candy) also double as an invitation to another kind of social exchange which might be positioned within the economy of the gift, while the bulletin boards of Liam Gillick explore other possibilities of discursive exchange Meanwhile, the exhibition tours of Andrea Fraser, the dealer biographies of Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster and the sartorial gags of Maurizio Cattelan update the artist-dealer-viewer nexus, playing out the displacement of aesthetic object by artistic service in a global market

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Bourriaud sketches a vast, diffuse and often contradictory field His disparate examples advance a version of social relations that is more or less harmonious, predicated on an overly idealized view of a community—however momentary the gathering—that is constituted by free and equal subjects While Sierra's work might also be grasped as "relational " nothing could be more antithetical to Bourriaud's microtopian vision than Sierra's dystopian reconstruction of the alienated labor relations of a global service economy Recall, to return to an earlier example the latent hostility that surrounded the encounter of labor and capital in Sierra's Arsenale project in 2001 For the critic Claire Bishop such projects foreground the moment of mutual non-identification between art and its audience (or between the different subjects presupposed by each), opening onto another mode of aesthetic experience, where sociability is structured as much by conflict as by reciprocity, where exchange is conceived as ineradicably antagonistic

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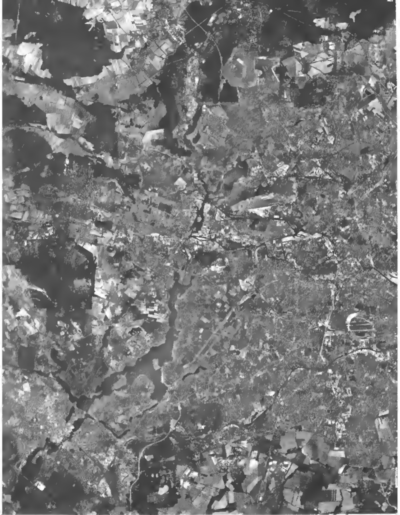
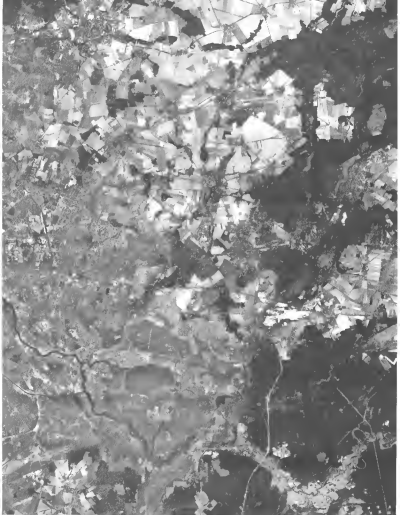
[7] Nicolas Bourriaud *Relational Aesthetics* (trans Simon Pleasance and Fronza Woods) (Les presses du réel 2002) p 42

[8] Ibid

[9] Ibid p 14





Bishop's model of what she calls "relational antagonism" functions as a critique of Bourriaud's theory of relational aesthetics, for which Sierra's deeply adversarial performances serves as a descriptive foil. For Bishop, the notion of antagonism allows us to reconsider Bourriaud's claims for the political implications of relational aesthetics. In their influential book, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe argue for the central role played by antagonism in the organization of politics around social divisions.[10] Trailing Lacan's notion of subjectivity as a failed structural identity formed through a series of identifications between necessarily incomplete entities, Laclau and Mouffe cast antagonism as a relation that shows the impossibility of a social order to fully constitute itself as an objective presence. Antagonism is therefore grasped as a limit internal to the social field, impeding its effort to achieve total closure.

In contrast, Bourriaud's discourse of relational communication ignores the divisions that coordinate the social field around relations of power and subordination. Premised on the idea of the subject as unified, it fails to question the contingencies that inevitably splinter the "being-together" of the community. Relational art's eclectic sociability promotes the principles of inclusion and pluralism but the eradication of conflict from dialogue obstructs in equal measure the potential for the more properly political communication requisite for the democratic reorganization of social co-existence.

Sierra's performances, as Bishop points out, operate in direct opposition to such enactments of happy belonging. The relations they map among the artist, the performers, and the audience depend precisely on an economy of exploitation from which no one is excluded. "Sierra pays others to do work for which he gets paid, and in turn he is exploited by galleries, dealers, and collectors."[11] This strategy of complicity, which elaborates a legacy of institutional critique from the 1970s that depended on procedures of aesthetic infiltration, enables Sierra to embed himself in the extra-artistic contexts of drug trafficking, prostitution, illegal street trade, and guest employment. As Bishop argues, he presents the social and economic divisions of these spheres as neither reconciled nor as entirely separate, and "the fact that his works are realized moves them into the terrain of antagonism (rather than the 'car crash' model of collision between full identities) and hints that their boundaries are both unstable and open to change."

Bishop's argument for the relational antagonism put into play by Sierra's work also places in question the latter's status as a symbolic or effective political intervention. To be clear, Mouffe understood the political as the irreducible antagonism that inheres in human relations. In this sense, the political is one dimension of politics, which refers to the collection of institutions, discourses and practices that organizes social co-existence in conflictual orders. There is no question that Sierra shows up the darker side of human sociability. But how does his recasting of the dynamics of globalized labor exploitation qualify as political antagonism? Mouffe defined the objective of adversarial politics as the reconfiguration of current social relations, as the tactical reinstatement of the significance of political opposition over market freedom. Sierra's mimicry of the very forms of alienation he ostensibly opposes, however does not work in quite the same direction. To what extent does this strategy remain limited by the forces it is supposed to contest?

While Bourriaud's eschewal of direct political action tends to reduce critical resistance to opposition and contradiction, Bishop's less than critical appraisal of Sierra's work restricts art's potential for critical transformation to nihilistic accommodation. Ironically, Mouffe's theory of antagonism, which Bishop marshaled in defense of Sierra, sets into relief the artist's disturbingly melancholic reinforcement of the status quo. It seems important to remember the specific context in which Mouffe formulated the model of antagonism. This idea, which functioned as the linchpin of the call to radicalize democracy in *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, is recalibrated in her more recent work to respond to the altered topology of politics. Since the publication of *Hegemony*, the demise of Communism and the rise of globalization has shifted the discourse of the Left in kind, which, subscribing to the fiction of a global "politics without frontiers," increasingly adapts itself to the hegemony of neo-liberalism. For Mouffe, the theory of political antagonism must be mobilized to challenge the prevailing tendency within liberal democracy to achieve consensus through a politics of the center that tends to eliminate the categories of left and right altogether.[12] As she argues, this recent reorientation fails to acknowledge the fundamental tension within the modern Western liberal democracy, which conjugates two incompatible grammars—on one hand, democracy, which upholds the values of popular sovereignty and the equality of the governing and the governed, and on the other, liberalism, which defends individual freedom and human rights. While the conflict of these incommensurate logics cannot be eliminated, neither does it signal, as Carl Schmitt insisted, that liberalism negates democracy and democracy negates liberalism.

Antagonism, of course, proposes a complex understanding of the relations of conflict that undermines such fruitless contradictions, while recognizing that all social systems are established through acts of exclusion. The pluralist co-existence envisaged by relational art's "interactive democracy" can therefore never be attained through the eradication of power, but rather through the struggle to contest existing political relations and institutions. Mouffe in fact advanced an anti-essentialist pluralism that construes the goal of full inclusion as an alibi. This view recognizes that the pluralism of interests and values in a democratic society entails the horizon of conflict, which we might thus recast by distinguishing between two types of antagonism: on one hand, the antagonism that obtains between enemies, defined as individuals or groups who share no common symbolic space, and on the other hand, the agonism that describes the struggle between adversaries, or between legitimate enemies who inhabit a common ground in their adhesion to the principles of freedom and equality. In this schema, the task of modern democracy is to transform antagonism into agonistic pluralism—which is to say, to establish a new hegemony.

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[10] See Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics* (Verso, 1985).

[11] Claire Bishop, "Relational Aesthetics," *October* 110 (Fall 2004): p. 70.

[12] See Chantal Mouffe, *The Democratic Paradox* (Verso, 2000).

If Mouffe's revision of the democratic paradox is predicated on the realignment of political borders, Sierra's articulated social divisions exacerbate the alienation of the present social order. In his action for the Arsenale in Venice, the focal point revolved around the forced recognition of the otherwise ignored street vendors that populate the city. As I pointed out, this highly charged misrecognition underscores the differences that divide an underprivileged sector from a more or less privileged art world. In another way, the complex relations plotted by that mutual non-identification also negate the possibility of converting that antagonism into something no less conflictual, but perhaps more or less productive. Significantly, the bleached hair of the vendors sets up an interesting equation between their self-distinction as individual subjects and their self-effacement as so many serial subjects. As their self-distinction may shock the audience, their self-abasement also shames them. Indeed if, as Bishop observed, the vendors seemed more subdued than usual, their spectators were no less so. The affect of both parties vectors the line of submission that unites the passivity enforced by subordination with that endorsed by our complicity. And it is that collusion that pushes the viewer toward the position of the artist, who reproduces the dynamics of power that underwrites the political subjugations he does not contest.

As a final example, consider Sierra's performance for the Kunste Werke in Berlin in September 2000. For this action, six Chechnyan workers were placed inside cardboard boxes for four hours a day for six weeks. As German legislation grants its refugees 80 marks (or $40 a month) on condition that he or she not work, the Chechnyan exiles collected their salaries in secret and the details of the work could not be made public at the time of its performance. This project, like many others, points to the transformation of occupational and income structures in our global economy, which depends increasingly on pools of immigrant labor to form links between industrialized and developing nations. Within this geography, Sierra identifies the systemic connections that broach the limit between the citizen and the immigrant or refugee, while linking the expansion of service industries to the production of urban marginality. However, if his performances give a visual presence to economic and political disenfranchisement, the spectacle of misery also reinforces the isomorphic relation of the periphery to capital.

Sierra has commented: "I can't change anything. There is no possibility that we can change anything with our artistic work. We do our work because we are making art, and because we believe art should be something, something that follows reality." The submission of art to the demands of global exchange fails to sustain the tension between the radical imaginary ideal implicit in the model of agonistic pluralism and the coercive management of multiple differences. Sierra's work, I am arguing, is political in its brutal representation of the tyrannies of globalism. At the same time, his gestures remain at the level of a largely private and atomized form of opposition that fails to imagine or even to admit the possibility of an alternative social order. For Mouffe, antagonism does not signify "the expulsion of utopia from the field of the political." By leaving all conflicts intact, Sierra effectively forecloses the potential of artistic practice to figure within the realm of culture what has not yet been realized in the world of politics. Sierra's starkly negative vision might be framed as a strategy of making do. But the diversion of marginal subjects into visible commodity-signs signals something far more menacing that renders the spectacle of globalized inequality into the politics of the same.

082-089

Propaganda for Democracy: The Avant-Garde Goes to War

Caroline Levine

During the Second World War, the Allies were impressed by the effective propaganda techniques of their enemies. Hitler and Mussolini staged spectacular pageants of national unity and superiority, paraded their military might, and used a centralized press to strengthen their regimes. But though democratic leaders *wanted* the same control and the same unanimity for the sake of wartime morale, they knew they couldn't just borrow fascist tactics: propaganda itself smacked of totalitarianism, and any control of the press would have made the Allies look hypocritical, copying precisely the illiberal enemies they were fighting.

It's against this backdrop that avant-garde art first emerged as an unlikely instrument of geopolitical warfare. I should mention that I'm using the term avant-garde in a deliberately loose way here to mean any art that seems shocking, challenging to mainstream tastes and values. It's my argument here that democracies in the twentieth century repeatedly—and covertly—produced what I call a *propaganda of the avant-garde*, sponsoring shocking, unpopular, even deliberately anti-majoritarian art as part of the struggle to win over hesitant citizens and wavering allies.

Why would a democracy support critical or challenging art in wartime? In their struggles against totalitarian and other oppressive regimes, democratic governments have wanted to persuade the world that they stand for a better way of life: not only economic well-being, but also a more intangible value—freedom. And this task hasn't been easy: democracy and freedom, despite what our leaders say, are not actually synonymous. Political theorists for centuries have argued that the power of the people can easily turn into mob rule, the tyranny of the majority. And this grows especially likely in times of war, since nations under threat often insist on promoting a sense of unity and cohesion as crucial to national security.

In this context, art that upsets the majority emerges as both dangerous *and* anti-democratic. So it surely seems counterintuitive to claim that artists reviled by the public and dismissive of the majority could come to prop up democracy. But in their relentless desire to proclaim their freedom from mainstream tastes and values, avant-garde artists offer democratic states a surprising opportunity, that is, the chance to display their hospitality to marginal and dissenting views. As long as the artist stands for freedom from majority tastes and values, then the state can point to the artist's freedom as an index of the freedom enjoyed by the *whole* society. And so, in both the Second World War and the Cold War, liberal democracies repeatedly publicized their commitment to freedom by embracing rebellious art works, and they did so not in spite of art's unpopularity but precisely because of it: the more the art was publicly vilified, the freer the society that put up with it must be.

But this story is far from straightforward. I'd like to give a very brief account of three examples: first, a little-known film called *Love on the Dole*, banned in Britain during the 1930s and then secretly commissioned and disseminated by the British Ministry of Information in 1940; second, Jackson Pollock, an Abstract Expressionist painter associated with communist sympathizers but secretly funded by the CIA, and finally, Richard M. Nixon, a red-baiter turned arts patron, who first thwarted and then eagerly promoted cutting-edge artists and their work. Taken together, these wartime stories suggest that avant-garde art can serve as remarkably effective propaganda for democracy—but only in the most paradoxical of ways.

In 1936, the British Board of Film Censors were scandalized when a film company proposed to make a film called *Love on the Dole*. Based on a best-selling novel by Walter Greenwood, the story follows the travails of a brother and sister, Harry and Sally Hardcastle. Both are hard-working and respectable, and though both begin with good jobs, economic conditions are worsening, and the family falls deeper into financial trouble as workers are laid off and factories close. The crisis comes when the government introduces the Means Test—suddenly insisting that thousands of unemployed workers no longer qualify for government aid and throwing them off the dole. Sally is engaged to a soft-spoken socialist activist who forms part of a deputation of workers intending to complain to the Mayor about the Means Test. On his way to the Mayor a crowd of other workers start to riot against police control, and Sally's fiancé dies in the struggle. Meanwhile, Sally's brother Harry is unable to find work, and his father throws him out of the house when he discovers that Harry's girlfriend is pregnant. The final scene offers a bitter resolution to the family's troubles. Sally becomes the mistress of a wealthy but repulsive local bookie. Only by losing her respectability to become Sam Grundy's mistress can Sally find jobs for both father and brother so that their families can survive.

The most worrying parts of the text from the Board of Film Censors' (BBFC) point of view were "the scenes of the mob fighting the police" and "Sally selling herself." So far, so predictable. Sally's fall from respectability, like the mob uprising, had radically unsettling implications, since both presented an image of a working class who could find no palatable alternatives within the existing system. The death of Sally's fiancé seemed to reinforce this message, suggesting that activists who attempted to argue for a peaceful alternative to the political and economic *status quo* would only be martyred in the process.

Several years later after the war against Germany had broken out, Walter Greenwood the author of the original novel of *Love on the Dole* wrote to the Manchester *Guardian* to complain that the British censors were acting like "Dr Goebbels " And since Britain was waging war in the name of liberty, the BBFC's powers to restrict free expression were making a mockery of the war itself with his own plot banned from the screen, Greenwood wrote, "all the talk of the freedom for which we are told we have been fighting [is] so much claptrap "

If this sounds like a familiar story, shortly after Greenwood's letter appeared in *The Guardian*, something odd happened. Greenwood was summoned to meet with the Secretary of the BBFC, who told the novelist that he must turn his plot into a screenplay without delay "This film's got to be made ' he said 'We've got a tip from someone 'higher up ' I can say no more ' Out of the blue, apparently the highest echelons of government were insisting that a film of *Love on the Dole* be sped into production Soon after British National Films released the movie, which starred Deborah Kerr in her first major role as Sally Hardcastle

When a government covertly commissions a film during wartime, we usually call it propaganda But what s most striking about *Love on the Dole* is how little it resembles conventional examples of propaganda Devoid of fighting heroes and short on rousing national sentiments, daring in its unsentimental storytelling and challenging to authority it seems more like a pointed critique of British class divisions, moral hypocrisy, and government policy than an inspiring tale of a nation coming together to fight for its life

And yet *Love on the Dole* could certainly be characterized as an 'official ' film So why exactly would sources 'higher up" suddenly decide that *Love on the Dole* should hit the big screen?

I've written elsewhere about a number of rationales that prompted the Ministry of Information to choose this particular plot but for now I just want to concentrate on what I think was the most important one Declassified documents show that in 1940 the British Ministry of Information was looking for ways to publicize the notion that Britain was a society worth fighting for because it was free unlike its totalitarian enemies But the British were world famous for their successful propaganda efforts in the First World War, and numerous voices in the 1930s, both at home and abroad had warned both Britons and potential allies that the British government was willing to disseminate lies and cunning deceptions for the sake of waging war Thus when the second world war loomed again on the horizon and when the British Government again wanted to enlist their own people as well the Americans on their side, they faced an acute public relations problem The very success of their propaganda efforts in the First World War had put the world on guard against further British efforts at persuasion At home, too, it seemed important to dismantle the propaganda apparatus to show that the Government was no longer seeking to shape public opinion Paradoxically enough, then, the ideal propaganda campaign seemed to involve persuading the world that the British were not actively engaged in propaganda

In 1940 Greenwood s letter complaining about the totalitarian censorship of *Love on the Dole* played right into the Ministry's hands After all, what could be a more effective display of liberty then publicly lifting an existing censorship? The Ministry of Information could stage a public performance of liberty by showing how permissive the British government could be—so free that it was willing to allow even hard-hitting critiques of its own policies to reach the big screen, so free that it gave working-class discontent a full hearing so free that it was willing to fly in the face of a tradition of restricted sexual mores in film Any government willing to face up to the stark truths presented by *Love on the Dole* could not, surely be a government interested in shrewd deceit If there was an irony to the government's plan to flaunt its commitment to freedom of expression by revoking its *own* prohibitions, this only proved that Britain at war was *especially* committed to freedom and public honesty As *The Spectator* put it

"Here is a film which contains the most damning exposure of reactionary politics which has ever appeared in a British feature-film Yet *Love on the Dole* is good for wartime morale , because, in the fact of its production it proves the survival of free speech "

Intent on unsettling its reputation for deceptive propaganda, the British government employed a troubling artistic critique of its own power and policy, and thereby produced an even cannier propaganda for democratic freedom

Across the ocean a few years later the US was dealing with a similar public relations quandary Restrictions on artistic freedom didn't seem like too bitter a pill to swallow at home, where people were frightened into giving up their civil liberties, but as a serious matter when it came to the image of the US in other parts of the world, where affiliation with West or East was still open to question Both sides of the Cold War fighting for the allegiance of the unaligned in Europe, Latin America Asia and Africa waged a grim battle for the minds of the uncommitted The Soviet Union charged that the US was a shallow and materialist culture, feeding the people glitzy matinee idols while the poorest starved, shamefully exploiting African-Americans, and obsessed only with wealth and military might. In 1946, the Assistant Secretary of State, William Benton, argued that the State Department needed to answer the Soviets, the "heroes of the Russians," he said, "are not the generals but the propagandists." He called for an inquiry into "cultural diplomacy." The cornerstone of any cultural mission would include the argument that the West supported essential freedoms, including unparalleled liberty for artists, writers, and intellectuals.

But in the late 1940s, the US was failing miserably at the task of broadcasting its commitment to freedom. In 1947, Congressman Fred Busbey of Illinois made a public stink about a daring new exhibition of modern American painters—including Arshile Gorky, Jacob Lawrence, Robert Motherwell, and Georgia O'Keefe. The show, called *Advancing American Art*, had been touring Europe and Latin America, funded by the State Department. But new trends in modern art had seemed to many conservatives to reek of left-wing subversion and alien influence, and it was certainly not difficult to rouse public antagonism against *Advancing American Art*. Tying the avant-garde aesthetics of the show to Soviet politics, *The New York Journal-American* publicized links between eight of the artists and an arts organization that, the paper said, toed "the Communist line." Other newspapers went along with this offensive, and the result was a fierce letter-writing campaign in which outraged citizens demanded that Congress cancel the show. The House Appropriations Committee cut off funding for the show, it was dismantled, and the works were sold off at a 95% discount.

The withdrawal of the show came as a blow to the State Department. *Advancing American Art* had seemed like a real success in diplomatic terms. Innovative, bold, and unexpected, the paintings had actually begun to persuade audiences in Eastern Europe and Latin America that the US was "not all military might and Hollywood movies, but a country capable of culture." In the Cold War context, the uncomfortable strangeness of the avant-garde was becoming precisely its virtue, where anything experimental, original, or even simply eccentric could be taken as evidence of democracy's capacity to accommodate free spirits. Thus in answer to the popular question, "Is modern art communistic?" Alfred Barr, director of the Museum of Modern Art, answered confidently: "The modern artist's nonconformity and love of freedom cannot be tolerated within a monolithic tyranny." But with US opinion at home so thoroughly hostile to contemporary trends in art, the campaign was clearly not going to be easy.

Caught between Soviet attacks on American popular culture and domestic assaults on modern art, US strategists began to craft a complex cultural diplomacy behind the scenes. Tom Braden, one of Allen Dulles's right-hand men in the newly formed CIA, realized that the greatest obstacle to the making of an art that could glorify democracy was democracy itself:

"I've forgotten which pope it was who commissioned the Sistine Chapel, but I suppose that if it had been submitted to a vote of the Italian people there would have been many, many negative responses: 'It's naked' or 'It isn't the way I imagined God,' or whatever. You always have to battle your own ignoramuses, or, to put it more politely, people who just don't understand."

If the US was going to persuade the world into pursuing a splendidly democratic future, it was going to be necessary to bypass democratic processes. "In order to encourage openness," Braden explained, "we had to be secret."

The CIA's role in cultural life in the 1940s and 50s is now widely known, but at the time they kept their operations successfully covert. They set up false foundations to fund modern art so that neither the artists nor the public would know that the government was supporting "extreme" and "radical" work. They had contacts within the major charitable foundations—Carnegie, Rockefeller, and Ford—whom they persuaded to sponsor exhibitions and performances worldwide to serve US foreign policy aims. The Congress for Cultural Freedom, a CIA front organization, funded major concerts, performances, art exhibitions, and academic conferences worldwide to glorify US artistic and intellectual production. And they did it all without the knowledge of Congress, which was caught in the grip of McCarthyist panic, sensing Soviet sympathizers around every corner.

In this context, the hypocrisy of Congress—restricting freedom in the name of freedom—was matched by the hypocrisy of the CIA—undermining democracy in the name of democracy. But maybe these contradictions shouldn't come as a surprise. Because the majority can turn tyrannical, intent on drowning out marginal and rebellious voices, democracy always runs the risk of limiting freedom. And because a perfect example of freedom is the right of minority and oppositional voices to speak out against the mainstream, freedom always runs the risk of weakening democracy. Both Congress and the CIA would have claimed that the US, unlike the Soviet Union, could be held up as a pillar of *both* freedom and democracy. But the Cold War makes it clear how agonizingly hard it was to serve both values at once. And so Congress betrayed freedom in the name of strong democracy while the CIA circumvented democracy in the name of freedom.

t was in this thorny political milieu that the avant-garde painter Jackson Pollock came to function as a vehicle for US Cold War propaganda Pollock was one of a loosely affiliated group of artists who came to be known as the Abstract Expressionists Unlike most of his Ab Ex fellows Pollock was recognizably—even stereotypically—American Born in Wyoming, he swaggered and drank like a cowboy Early on he worked with the radical Mexican muralist David Alfaro Siqueiros, making Marxist-inspired "art for the people, including a float for a Communist Party rally But in the late 1940s Pollock began turning away from figurative painting and overtly political work, in favor of abstraction Most notoriously he introduced a shocking new signature method—"drip painting"—which refused conventional brushwork altogether Pollock became famous for "action painting," a process that required vigorous and energetic movement He boasted of liberating painting with his ground-breaking techniques

The CIA saw in Pollock a kind of perfect distillation of Cold War aims Defiant and challenging, staggeringly original and anti-conventional, he proved that American culture had taken precisely the road the Soviets with their insistence on formulaic Socialist Realism, had refused But here Pollock s story gets complicated John Hay Whitney and Allen Dulles of the CIA knew they couldn't fund artists openly, because the artists would probably object to working for the CIA

matters of this sort could only be done through the organizations of the CIA at two or three [steps] removed, so that there wouldn t be any question of having to clear Jackson Pollock, for example or do anything that would involve these people in the organization [M]ost of them were people who had very little respect for the government in particular and certainly none for the CIA "

In other words in order to find and promote artists who stood for the kind of freedom the American government wanted to broadcast to the world, that government had to hide their support from the artists who saw themselves as outside the system, too radical and anti-conventional to act as agents of government policy The Ab Ex painters would have felt that they were precisely too free to act as official representatives of freedom

The CIA kept one step ahead Friends and connections at the Museum of Modern Art in New York offered clandestine help Rene d Harnoncourt, the Museum's director consulted with the National Security Council Sponsoring shows and collecting works of the Ab Ex painters through the 1940s MoMA helped to boost the artists from obscurity to international renown, including organizing the first show dedicated solely to Ab Ex painters in Paris, a show that was actually funded by Nelson Rockefeller, later Eisenhower s special advisor on Cold War strategy

Pollock's newfound fame did not bring him unqualified praise To the contrary *Time* magazine nicknamed him "Jack the Dripper," and a host of other magazines and newspapers mocked his wild technique But this was all to the good, from the CIA's point of view After all, an artist like Jackson Pollock couldn't demonstrate his unsettling and revolutionary shattering of constraints unless he managed to disturb and trouble conservative audiences Mocked by the press for their wild daubings and loathed by populists in Congress for their enigmatic innovations the Ab Ex group were the ideal figures to demonstrate to the world that no matter how distasteful artists might seem to the general public, the United States still allowed them to flourish and thrive One CIA official went so far as to suggest that if an artist found himself "closer to Moscow than to Washington," then "so much the better" his early Communist ties would help to hide the government's involvement in the arts and allow the artist to seem the perfect rebel entirely untrammeled by institutional recognition or state connections

In the Cold War, then Abstract Expressionist painters became propagandists for the state precisely because they refused to work on behalf of the state, and they became representatives of democracy precisely because they were vilified by "the people"

Only one major figure in the Cold War seems to have stood on both sides of the strange logic of avant-garde propaganda supporting *both* national unity and artistic freedom Richard Nixon is an unlikely ally of the avant-garde to be sure, but he—of all people—is one of the few to have taken advantage of it first by decrying art as an enemy of the people and then by celebrating it as an emblem of American freedom

Nixon first made his name as an aggressive young member of House Un-American Activities Committee He took an active part in the investigation of suspected Communists in Hollywood and took the campaign against artists to a new extreme urging Congress "to make a thorough investigation of art in government buildings with the view of obtaining removal of all that is found to be inconsistent with American "ideals and principles" " So he began his powerful career by red-baiting not only fellow politicians, but artists, writers, composers, and actors whose rebellious defiance was enough at that time to get them categorized as a danger to national security

By December 10, 1969, Richard Nixon had changed his tune. Now President of the United States, he sent a special message to Congress arguing for the importance of federal support for the arts:

“The growth [of the arts is] vital to our national well-being. America has moved to the forefront as a place of creative expression. The excellence of the American product in the arts has won worldwide recognition. . . . Our creative and performing artists give free and full expression to the American spirit as they illuminate, criticize and celebrate our civilization.”

Nixon was, of course, right. Thanks in no small part to the efforts of the CIA, American artists had indeed gained international renown, not only by illuminating and celebrating U.S. values and traditions, but also, as Nixon claimed, by criticizing them.

Gesturing to the international value of the free and critical artist, Nixon asked Congress to approve a significant increase in support for the arts. In so doing, he startled not only his opponents but his own Republican base. Even the original tiny amount of $5 million allocated to federal arts support had been bitterly opposed by Republicans and conservative Democrats in the House. And in the late 60s, under pressure from conservatives concerned about leftist art works, Congress cut individual grants to artists. But Nixon’s first year in office marked a dramatic rise in federal arts funding. From 1969 onward, his commitment to the arts was ever more extravagant. He proposed to double the NEA budget initially, and Congress agreed, providing $20 million for 1971, $30 million for 1972, and climbing to an all-time high of $126 million for 1976.

Given Nixon’s long-term dedication to routing out subversive elements in American culture, what was it that prompted his about-face concerning artists? I want to suggest that he was a canny strategist. Just as he was the only president who could go to China and escape being labeled soft on Communism, his HUAC past allowed him to dole out record sums of money to the arts without becoming known as an effete, left-leaning intellectual out of touch with popular taste. On the one hand, as a leading voice in HUAC, he had helped to channel and encourage the feelings of a frightened mainstream, making an impassioned case for limits on freedom in the name of a united and strong democracy. On the other hand, as President, Nixon turned around to make use of modern art as an exemplar of the kind of freedom that democratic states could guarantee. And so Nixon managed the surprising feat of championing the contradictory aims of democracies at war: as a fanatical censor, he stood for a strong, unified democracy; as a generous patron of the arts, he promoted the challenging voices of a dissenting freedom.

What this Macchiavellian complexity might obscure is the fact that in all of these cases, the state didn’t simply censor artists, nor did it force them to sell out. Rather, government repression, popular outcry, and artistic rebellion worked together, albeit unwittingly, to *produce* the curious propaganda of the avant-garde. When publicly elected officials express an open and explicit aversion to avant-garde art, their loathing allows artists to seem like enemies of the electorate, but this is also what allows them to act as exemplary instances of freedom from majority rule. And so, oddly enough, art does its best as an instrument of democratic freedom when it’s both rejected *and* promoted.

Perverse though it is, this is the logic of the avant-garde at war.

090-095

The Right to Representation: Toyo Miyatake's Camera as a Symbol of Japanese American Resistance to Incarceration

Jasmine Alinder

Photographs made during wartime have ranged from documents that record violence to icons that celebrate heroism. In 2004 the release of photographs from Abu Ghraib in Iraq confirmed accusations of prisoner abuse in vivid and lurid detail Taken as trophies, these photographs became evidence of savage torture With these images now deeply embedded in the public visual consciousness, it is all the more difficult to make sense of the photographs made of Japanese American incarceration in the United States during World War II Far from depictions of detainee ill treatment, these images often depict smiling prisoners As pictures of imprisonment, the two sets of photographs could not appear to be more different But they both betray the camera s status as a key site of power during wartime.

In fact, the control of the means of representation affected nearly every aspect of the World War II incarceration—from the criminalization of Japanese Americans through identity photographs to the prohibition of cameras in the concentration camps At the same time that U.S government officials hired photographers to make an extensive record of the forced removal and imprisonment they forbade Japanese Americans from documenting the conditions of the camps or any aspect of their lives photographically Eventually, outside visitors could bring a camera into the incarceration camps as could Japanese American soldiers on furlough And some of the camps established photography studios, typically under the oversight of the camp administration, to make portraits and document important events [1]

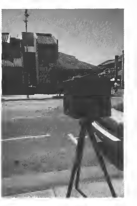
Despite photography s status as a site of government and military control during the war, in the past 15 years exhibitions and markers that publicly represent the history of Japanese American incarceration have recuperated the technology of the camera as a symbol of the struggle to preserve personal dignity in the face of humiliation dishonor and the denial of citizenship rights [2] A bronze sculpture representing a large weathered view camera, for example, stands on the sidewalk outside of the Japanese American National Museum's historic building in Los Angeles Installed in 1993 by artist Nobuho Nagasawa the sculpture is an enlarged replica of the camera used by Toyo Miyatake inside Manzanar the concentration camp 250 miles north east of Los Angeles, where he was imprisoned with his family and 10,000 other Japanese Americans during World War II [3] The text panel accompanying this piece explains Toyo Miyatake's significance to the Japanese American community of Los Angeles

> First-generation Japanese American photographer Toyo Miyatake (1895) opened his photography studio in Little Tokyo in 1923 and spent the rest of his life documenting his community's life on film When the United States government unjustly incarcerated Miyatake, his family and 120,000 Japanese Americans during World War II Miyatake bravely smuggled lens and film plate, considered contraband, into the Manzanar concentration camp in California Using a secretly constructed camera, he captured everyday life in Manzanar

The "secretly constructed camera" has itself become a valuable artifact appearing in exhibitions that feature Miyatake In 1998 the small camera beautifully carved from wood, was exhibited at the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center in Los Angeles for a retrospective exhibition of Miyatake's photography and later at the Friends of Photography/Ansel Adams Center in San Francisco for an exhibition called "Picturing Manzanar "

Directly across the street from the replica of Miyatake s camera is a wall mural that reproduces eight photographs of Japanese American life over the twentieth century Three of the photographs are by Miyatake including one contemplative image of barracks and clouds from Manzanar The wall gives credit to those who survived wartime incarceration and closes by dedicating the wall to early Nikkei whose lives struggles and achievements make a full and moving picture in the large American panorama " Although he died over twenty-five years ago, Miyatake is remembered on this block in Little Tokyo as the photographic chronicler of over fifty years of Japanese American life Miyatake's Manzanar camera and the description of its illicit entry into camp, has come to signify a kind of protest against the politics of incarceration that draws on the power of every day acts of self representation

The emphasis on Miyatake and his contraband camera is prominent within the core exhibition of the Japanese American National Museum, 'Common Ground," which opened in 1999 where he is pictured in Little Tokyo in the act of taking photographs And they play an even more significant role in the new museum in the visitor s center at Manzanar where an entire display is built to mimic Miyatake's Manzanar darkroom Miyatake, himself, is one of a dozen former prisoners whose biography is featured through identification tags that museum-goers can detach from a wall and take with them The prominent focus on Miyatake in these recently mounted exhibitions in California is in contrast to his notable absence from earlier displays outside of the West Coast, including the "A More Perfect Union Japanese Americans and the U.S Constitution" exhibition, which was housed in the National Museum of American History in Washington D C from 1988-2004 and has a continued presence online



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1 See Richard Chalfen *Turning Leaves The Photograph Collections of Two Japanese American Families* (Albuquerque University of New Mexico Press 1991) xvii

2 Exhibitions dedicated to telling the history of incarceration became more prominent in the late 1980s as Congress passed the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 authorizing monetary compensation for former prisoners and availing funds for historical and cultural projects Earlier in 1980 the U.S government formed the Commission of Wartime Relocation and Incarceration of Citizens that held one-and-a half years of public hearings throughout the country gathering testimony from over 750 witnesses In 1983 the CWRIC issued their findings in *Personal Justice Denied*, determining that incarceration was the result of "race prejudice war hysteria and a failure of political leadership " Academic scholarship began to focus on incarceration in the 1970s and 1980s with Michi Weglyn s *Years of Infamy The Untold Story of America s Concentration Camps* first published in 1976 and Roger Daniel s first book on the subject *Concentration Camps North America Japanese in the United States and Canada during World War II* (Kreiger 1981)

3 Nobuho Nagasawa *Toyo Miyatake s Camera* 1993 18"h x 18" w x 21-3/4" atop 4 high tripod 369 East First Street, Los Angeles California
↑ Photograph by Jasmine Alinder

The 1998 exhibition of Miyatake's photography at the Japanese American Community and Cultural Center in L.A. demonstrated his range as an artist in the pictorialist tradition and as a working portrait photographer.[4] In addition to his commissioned portraiture, Miyatake photographed professional dancers and athletes, and he submitted art photographs to national and international salon competitions. As a professional photographer, he earned his living and supported his family with his studio work, at the same time that he built a solid reputation as an artist.[5]

During the 1920s Miyatake became friends with the well-known photographer Edward Weston and convinced Weston to exhibit some of his work for the Japanese community. Weston exhibited for "a Japanese Club" on First Street in Little Tokyo in 1925 and sold several prints. In a letter to Tina Modotti, Weston wrote of this exhibition: "What a relief to show before a group of intelligent men! If Los Angeles society wishes to see my work after this, they must come to the Japanese quarter and rub elbows with their peers—or no—I should say their superiors!"[6]

Seventeen years after that Weston show, in 1942, with the signing of Executive Order 9066 by President Roosevelt, Toyo Miyatake was forced from his home and his livelihood and moved his family first to an "assembly center" and then into the government concentration camp at Manzanar. Japanese Americans were strictly forbidden to bring cameras into the camps. The government classified the camera as a weapon of war in the same category as guns, bombs and ammunition. According to Bulletin no. 126 from the Japanese American Citizens League dated 24 March, 1942:

> After March 31, 1942, no person of Japanese ancestry shall have in his possession or use or operate at any time or place within any of the Military Areas 1 to 6 inclusive, any of the following items: a. firearms b. weapons c. ammunition d. bombs e. explosives f. short wave radio g. radio transmitting sets h. signal devices i. Codes or ciphers j. cameras.[7]

Afraid that he would be accused of spying and separated from his family, the story goes that Miyatake did not mention even to his wife and children his plans to smuggle a lens, film and a film holder into Manzanar. He later told his son Archie that he risked being caught because he felt that as a photographer it was his responsibility to make a record of their experiences for the future. In camp, Miyatake made a camera body from scraps of wood with the help of a carpenter and began clandestinely recording camp life.[8]

There are only a handful of publications that discuss Miyatake's photography in Manzanar. A few of these publications maintain that the Manzanar administration caught Miyatake with his camera.[9] I have found no record of Miyatake's being apprehended or punished in the archival holdings pertaining to Manzanar, and after I pressed his son Archie on the matter, he admitted the possibility that his father was never captured with his secret camera.[10] Regardless of whether or not the camp authorities detected the camera, however, if Miyatake did construct a camera clandestinely it was a courageous and highly risky act. But why would he have taken that risk, given that the kind of photographs he made do not focus on particular acts of mistreatment or violence? When the Japanese American National Museum, for example, needed photographs that depicted physical abuse, they did not turn to images that came from Miyatake's smuggled camera, but from attorney Wayne Collins' contraband lens. Miyatake simply did not make the kind of image that depicts stark brutality, a genre of photograph that is severely underrepresented in the photographic archive of incarceration. Given events in Manzanar, which I will describe below, one must assume that this was not because sufficient acts of cruelty did not present themselves in front of Miyatake's eyes. But rather given the size of the view camera he used, much larger than a snap shot camera, it would not have been possible for him to photograph unobtrusively.

One year after Miyatake's arrival at Manzanar, his determination led to the creation of a photography studio in the camp. The origins of the studio lie in a more general set of reforms undertaken by the camp authorities after a series of violent conflicts between camp personnel and incarcerated Japanese Americans during the first year of imprisonment. In December of 1942, a riot broke out in Manzanar and military police killed two Japanese Americans and injured at least ten others.[11]

Two months after the riot, the War Relocation Authority distributed a questionnaire to all prisoners over the age of 17 in order to ascertain national loyalty and by extension potential danger to the United States. Titled the Leave Clearance Questionnaire, the document posed two questions in particular that struck many Japanese Americans as an insulting form of entrapment. Question 27 asked if one would be willing to serve on combat duty in the armed forces of the United States military if ordered. Question 28 asked whether one would renounce all loyalty to the Japanese Emperor and swear allegiance to the U.S. The effect of the questionnaire was divisive and tore at the fabric of already disrupted lives. Those who answered "no" to the crucial questions were branded "disloyals" by the government, referred to as "no-no boys," segregated from other prisoners—including in many cases their own families—and sent to Tule Lake, a higher security concentration camp in Northern California.[12]

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[4] The exhibition "Three Generations: Toyo Miyatake Studio" was held in the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center in Los Angeles from 21 February through 5 April 1998.

[5] Toyo Miyatake's wife became the business manager and his son Archie his assistant.

[6] Edward Weston, letter to Tina Modotti, August 1925. Quoted in Atsufumi Miyatake, Taisuke Fujishima and Eikoh Hosoe, eds., *Toyo Miyatake Behind the Camera 1923-1979*, trans. Paul Petite (Tokyo: Bungeishunju Co. Ltd., 1984), 11.

[7] Bulletin no. 135 from 30 March 1942 gives instructions for the move to Assembly Centers including "No contraband items as described may be carried." Box 1:11, MSS 97/145C, Dorothea Lange papers, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

[8] Miyatake, Fujishima and Hosoe, eds., 5.

[9] See Graham Howe, Jacqueline Markham, Patrick Nagatani and Scott Rankin, eds., *Two Views of Manzanar* (Los Angeles: UCLA Wight Gallery, 1978).

[10] Archie Miyatake, personal interview, 3 August 1998.

[11] Roger Daniels, Sandra Taylor and Harry Kitano, eds., "Chronology of Japanese American History," *Japanese Americans: From Relocation to Redress* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1991), xx.

[12] For a particularly poignant fictional account of the psychic trauma following the release of a "no-no" boy (the slang term for someone who answered "no" to both questions 27 and 28) from prison and his return home, see John Okada, *NO NO Boy* (1957; Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1976).

After the 1942 riot and during the removal of so-called "segregees" to Tule Lake, Ralph Merritt, he director of Manzanar attempted to achieve peace through a paternalistic system of camp government which allowed "internees" to expand the services they provided for themselves nitially cooperative businesses in Manzanar consisted of a few essential shops such as a dry goods store to serve the prisoners' needs The offerings of the cooperative expanded to include fourteen departments by the fall of 1943 [13]

n February of 1943 the *Manzanar Free Press* announced the "approval for an establishment of a photo studio " The article indicated the limits of the studio s operations "Although under the Army uling only appointed personnel will be permitted actually to take pictures all other work connected with the enterprise will be handled by Japanese personnel "[14] In other words appointments could be taken sitters arranged, lighting set, film developed and prints made by Japanese Americans but the actual release of the shutter—the taking of the pictures—had to be executed by appointed personnel meaning white appointees of the administration Furthermore, the ' appointed personnel' removed the lens from the camera at the end of the workday, secured it and brought it back to the studio for the next appointment [15]

The strict regulation of the studio reflected the power that the government attributed to photography [16] By prohibiting cameras, the government believed that they were discouraging sabotage but at the same time they also took away the ability for Japanese Americans to represent themselves photographically Within the Manzanar photo studio the site of power resided not in the positioning of the subject but in the very release of the shutter The government's regulation of control over who clicked the shutter was a demonstration of power over the right to self-representation.

After replacing the ironing room in Block 30, the studio was slated for a grand opening on 12 April 1943 [17] Miyatake s appointed assistant went to Los Angeles to buy used photographic equipment, and the head of evacuee properties wrote a letter so that Miyatake could get some of his own equipment out of storage Nine days later the camp newspaper ran a front-page article highlighting the talented staff of the newly opened photography studio

> Toyo Miyatake, manager of the photo studio is formerly of Los Angeles where he was proprietor of the well-known Toyo Studios His efforts have been recognized by the London Salon of Photography, the Pittsburgh Photography Society and the Rochester Society of Professional Photography He was selected by the Eastman Kodak Co to represent them at the nationally known American Professional Photography Association Yes, Manzanar's photo studio is filled with professional artists that cannot be equaled in the majority of outside studios [18]

The mission of the photography studio of Manzanar was primarily to commemorate important rites of passage the progress of the family and associations between people in educational and civic clubs

It appears that the official assistant hired to release the camera's shutter, however, did not last long for the *Manzanar Free Press* reported that the photography studio had to be "temporarily closed due to lack of photographer' less than two months after it opened [19] The problem lay not in the lack of a photographer but rather the lack of a person authorized to click the shutter As the newspaper continued

> Since Manzanar is in the Western Defense Area A, evacuees cannot operate cameras The last letter from National Director D S Myer to the Co-op indicates that this ruling cannot be extended so that an evacuee photographer may operate a stationary camera at the studio [20]

According to Archie Miyatake Ralph Merritt eventually decided to hire camp administrators' wives to chaperone the studio so that picture taking could resume By the end of the school year in June of 1943 the studio was back in business and the newspaper reminded high school graduates to make appointments to have their cap and gown pictures taken [21]

Despite Dillon Myer s firm stance against "internee ' operation of a camera, even within the confines of a studio eventually Ralph Merritt gave Miyatake clearance to photograph without supervision Contemporary Japanese photographer Eikoh Hosoe conducted interviews with Toyo Miyatake that shed some light on this matter Hosoe describes one of his meetings with Miyatake during which Miyatake connected his friendship to Edward Weston with the granting of permission to photograph Manzanar

> One day at Manzanar, the director of the camp, Mr Ralph Merritt suddenly summoned me to his office I thought he d found out about me taking pictures of the

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13 "Cooperative Enterprises Serve Residents Needs " *Manzanar Free Press* 10 September 1943 5 The WRA s stated goal was to make each relocation center as nearly self-sufficient as possible The WRA attempted to make the concentration camps largely self-sufficient in terms of governance labor and material necessities Japanese Americans worked at low wages to produce food and services for themselves reducing the government s financial burden The WRA allowed prisoners to establish " community governments " although ultimate power resided in the hands of white officials Offices in the community government were only open to citizens or Nisei and not their Issei parents The exclusion of Issei from these governments as well as from other influential positions such as camp newspaper editor reflected a larger effort by the government to shift the balance of power in Japanese American communities from the Issei to their citizen-born children See United States Department of the Interior War Relocation Authority *Relocation Communities for Wartime Evacuees* (Washington D C War Relocation Authority 1942) 3

14 Hiroshi Neeno "Co-op Information Bureau " *Manzanar Free Press* 10 February 1943 3

15 Archie Miyatake personal interview 3 August 1998

16 Japanese Americans including professional artists and amateurs created a large body of other visual material including paintings and sketches during the incarceration Many of these works communicate dissatisfaction with incarceration In 1992 scholar/curator Karin Higa mounted an exhibition and published a catalogue entitled *The View from Within Japanese American Art from the Internment Camps 1942 1945* (Los Angeles Japanese American National Museum the UCLA Wight Gallery and the UCLA Asian American Studies Center 1992)

17 "Photo Studio to Hold Grand Opening Monday *Manzanar Free Press* 10 April 1943 1

18 "Local Studio Presents Status and Personnel " *Manzanar Free Press* 21 April 1943 1

19 "Photo Studio Temporarily Closed Due to Lack of Photographer " *Manzanar Free Press* 29 May 1943 1

20 *Manzanar Free Press* Saturday 29 May 1943 1

21 "Grads Reminded About Pictures " *Manzanar Free Press* 28 June 1943 3

> camp with my hand-made camera and went to his office prepared to be reprimanded. But when I got there he didn't have anything in particular to say. As I started to leave, he said in a soft voice, 'Edward is worried about you.' Merritt and Weston were old friends so Weston might have approached Merritt but after that I was permitted to bring in cameras and film from outside and to take pictures inside the camp freely. I'm pretty sure Weston's influence had something to do with it.[22]

According to this version of events told by Miyatake through Hosoe, Miyatake's association with Weston conferred credibility in the eyes of the camp administration.[23] That photographer Edward Weston vouched for Miyatake may reveal something about the lack of a threat Miyatake's photography would have imposed. Weston is the supreme example of a formalist art photographer, dedicated entirely to art making and, unlike his contemporaries Ansel Adams and Dorothea Lange, never focused his camera's lens on any subject that smacked of politics.[24] Similarly, Miyatake's pre-incarceration work was either commissioned portraiture or highly-conscious artistic works that were aligned with pictorialism not documentary. Weston's effort then likely conferred his understanding that as a fellow dedicated artist, Miyatake's separation from his camera would have been unbearable. Whatever understanding existed between Merritt and Miyatake was not a part of official policy. The "Final Report" of the Manzanar Relocation Center makes no mention of Miyatake or the photo studio under the subject "Project Photography."[25]

According to Archie Miyatake, after the camp administrators' wives quit their chaperoning, no one came to inspect what his father was doing. He was able to take his camera and tripod around the 550-acre grounds of Manzanar and take pictures without any overt strictures on his subject matter. Nonetheless, the vast majority of Miyatake's Manzanar images fall into conventional categories of representation including portraiture, event commemoration, and high school yearbook illustration.[26] Miyatake and his staff were responsible for producing the photographs for two consecutive Manzanar high school yearbooks—*Our World* and the *Valediction*. Flipping through the pages of Our World, one is struck by how familiar it looks—the conventions of yearbook prose, layout and photography have changed little over the decades. Thespians, athletes, service club members and class officers are all featured with pictures and text describing their accomplishments.

The text and images, however, reveal a dislocated normality in which photographs simultaneously deny and call attention to the gap between the lives of other teenaged Americans and the reality of the Japanese American existence behind barbed wire. The senior class was honored with individual one-inch square portraits arranged in rows.[27] Sitters were not only identified by name but also by high school attended prior to evacuation, a reminder of their lives before the Executive Order and of the continued existence of those schools purged of their Japanese American students. Toyo Miyatake's son was a senior in 1944. He is photographed in his coat and tie, his shoulders cocked to the side and his head facing forward. His caption lists his given name, "Atsufumi Miyatake," and his previous high school, "Theodore Roosevelt."

In addition to the inclusion of photographic formulae, the teenaged editors of the yearbook inserted more concrete, critical commentary on incarceration. In *Our World* the editors thank those who contributed to the yearbook and point the reader to the end of the book with these words: "As you turn to the last page in this book, we hope that you will do so with a satisfied feeling. For it is very important to us that you will find in this story an accurate picture of the school and community life that you are living." The last page reproduces a photograph of a guard tower and barbed wire fence. That the yearbook closes with a symbol of incarceration serves both to remind the reader of the circumstances of coercion under which this high school existed, and temper what is by its nature an effusively optimistic genre of publication.

Even more sharply critical is one of the opening images of the 1944-45 yearbook, the *Valediction*, which shows a hand poised with a pair of pliers ready to cut through the confining barbed wire. According to Archie Miyatake, Toyo Miyatake gave him the pliers to hold up to the fence as his father took the picture.[28] Next to that image is a photograph of a young couple with packed suitcases walking out of Manzanar. These two seniors make more than the traditional departure from high school—they leave their lives as prisoners for the world outside. The images and text depict an idealized representation of freedom in which the end of incarceration is not portrayed as a government decree but as a provocative, and potentially transgressive, act of self-liberation.

At a time when the capability of Japanese Americans to be American had been denied, photographs of weddings and school portraits served not only as intimate registers of personal rites of passage but also as politically charged assertions of Americanness denied by state-sponsored incarceration and propaganda. Anti-Japanese sentiment and white fear of the disloyalty of Japanese Americans had been fueled by depictions of the Japanese enemy in the press. Using a wide range of documents including films, soldiers' diaries and war posters, John Dower argues in his book *War Without Mercy* that ruthless caricatures in United States propaganda facilitated the killing of the enemy as soldiers were fed an image of the Japanese as "nonhuman or subhuman . . . as animals reptiles or insects."[29] The effect of such imagery was to cast people of Japanese descent out of the human race in visual terms. While U.S. propaganda also portrayed Germans and Italians in a negative light, Dower points out that images of people of Japanese descent were considerably more extreme.

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[22] Miyatake, Fujishima and Hosoe, eds., 12.

[23] This interview also implies that Miyatake was not captured with his camera, either because the administrator failed to learn of its existence or chose not to act on this knowledge if he did.

[24] In December of 1934, Weston wrote Adams asserting that there was social significance in a rock as well as a line of unemployed people. See Edward Weston, letter to Ansel Adams, 3 December 1934, Street Alinder and Gray Stillman, eds., 75-76.

[25] Robert L. Brown, "Final Report, Manzanar Relocation Center, Division Functional Reports," Vol. I, Box 4, Manzanar Papers, UCLA.

[26] Towards the end of the incarceration, Miyatake was allowed to travel to the Poston and Gila River concentration camps in Arizona to make photographs of art works produced by Japanese Americans for a book on concentration camp art. Although Allen H. Eaton's *Beauty Behind Barbed Wire: The Arts of the Japanese in Our War Relocation Camps* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1952) was not published until well after the war, the book sought to cultivate "appreciation and love for . . . our people of Japanese ancestry," as well as celebrate the "distinguished record of the War Relocation Authority." See Eaton, xiii. Miyatake's photographs themselves were not included as examples of prisoner artistic production. A much later publication on Japanese American artistic production, however, did cite Miyatake as an artist in his own right. See James K. Okutsu, *Expressions from Exile, 1942-1945: Japanese American Art from the Concentration Camps* (San Francisco: San Francisco State University, 1979), 9.

[27] In retrospect, they read as haunting memorials to forfeited youth. Like the photographic installations of contemporary artist Christian Boltanski, the repeating rows of faces with similar smiles, matching outfits and neatly combed hair suggest trauma through their very banality. Boltanski's *Altar to the Chases High School* (1987) serves as a memorial to the youth whose lives were extinguished during the Holocaust. In this work he blurs the students' faces in a way that obscures individual identities but still allows their expressions to be legible. Thus rendered, the faces stand for an individual and thousands at the same time.

[28] Archie Miyatake, personal interview, 3 August 1998.

In addition to the vilification of Japanese in the popular media, military and government officials in charge of the incarceration process joined in the racist chorus by equating the enemy Japanese with Japanese Americans. Head of the Western Defense Command, General John De Witt asserted in April 1943, "A Jap's a Jap." His comment cited the incorrigible or inassimilable quality attributed by U.S. officials to the Japanese, and the conflation of Japanese Americans with the enemy Japanese. In De Witt's view, the European Axis powers represented a threat that the allies could subdue without destroying, as opposed to the Japanese, or as he put it, "the Japs [about whom] we will be worried ... until they are wiped off the face of the map."[30] As one former prisoner recalled of his incarcerated adolescence, "We were looked upon as untrustworthy, disloyal, sneaky, etc., and perhaps most of all, not really as someone with an identity—only a number."[31] Miyatake's photographs emphasized the individuality of Japanese Americans at a time when racist discourse was obsessively rendering people of Japanese descent as an indistinguishable, homogenous mass.

As Abigail Solomon Godeau has written, the documentary photographic tradition, most famously represented by FSA depression-era photographs, often permanently traps the subject in what she calls "a double act of subjugation," fixing the subject forever under the dehumanizing terms of abuse.[32] Rather than images that depict suffering, however, Toyo Miyatake's photographs have become vehicles for Japanese Americans not only to represent an identity that was not predicated entirely on their incarceration, but to structure what would become their memories of wartime imprisonment. At family gatherings, a yearbook or wedding photograph could be shared, and the subject of the photograph could exert some control over how his or her image would be read, offering the appropriate degree of explanation about the painful topic of incarceration. As one of the yearbook editors recalled, "The pictures Toyo Miyatake took of us, the camp activities, the life and daily routine recorded in photographs brings back all those years in sharp focus."[33] One Miyatake photograph depicts parents and a son, whose uniform reveals that he is on leave from the U.S. military, as they sit in their Manzanar barrack and look at images. The family activity of passing photographs back and forth realizes the liberatory possibility created by Miyatake's Manzanar photography, and the symbolic weight of his camera as an artifact with the power to alter the terms of remembrance for those who experienced the depersonalization and dehumanization of incarceration.

Display of Toyo Miyatake's Darkroom, Manzanar Interpretive Center, Manzanar, CA. Photograph by Jasmine Alinder

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[29] See John Dower, *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986) 81.

[30] Quoted in Dower 81.

[31] P. Chikahisa, quoted in Amy Iwasaki Mass, "Psychological Effects of the Camps on Japanese Americans," *Japanese Americans from Relocation to Redress*, eds. Daniels, Taylor and Kitano 59 162.

[32] Abigail Solomon Godeau, *Photography at the Dock* (University of Minnesota Press, 1994) 176.

[33] Bruce Kaji, quoted in Honda, *Our World* n pag.

096-119

Staging Torture

Moline

098-101

Prison Theatricality in the Romanian Gulag*

Ruxandra Cesereanu

Inside the Romanian Gulag (1945-1964), there existed a sort of prison theatricality through which the repressive apparatus of the Communist regime sought to express itself in an "artistic" and morbid form This theatricality manifested itself in satanic performances and rituals that were blasphemies of Christian ritual and religion The prisoners for their part, wanted to assume and act out grandiose performances of Christian festivities precisely for the reason that they were prohibited

In any show there are directors and actors, in the Romanian prisons, the torturers, the jailers, and all other members of the repressive apparatus were, in a sense, the "directors " In talking about an "art" of performance we mean performances of torture ceremonies and Black Masses at Christmas and Easter conceived as grotesque and blasphemous shows The prison of Pitesti near Bucharest is a clear example of this "art" between the years 1949–52 The torturers essentially understood the torture as both ceremony and pedagogy as what Michel Foucault defines as a "theatre of punishments " Obviously, this prison theatricality during the entire Pitesti experiment was absurd, but not tragic in all senses Some of the prisoners remember that they were obliged to be disguised and masquerade as Saint John Uncle Sam, The Pope and Jesuit Monks and to act as jesters Sometimes the victims were called by the names of various saints or martyrs and then were tortured exactly like that particular saint or martyr One question that should be raised is whether the executioners' theatricality was dependent on the individual s personal history, or if the whole performance was representative of an absurd carnival where all the values were twice turned upside down first, because every carnival is a reality turned upside down, and second, because the performance took place in prison

However the performance of torturers and tortured was fundamentally a display of power through which both the body and soul of the victim was manipulated The question is whether the torture rituals should be interpreted only as a morbid theatricality or if in fact, the theatricality changed its meaning when applied to the prison conditions There are numerous scenes from the Romanian Gulag that exist on the borderline between acting and torture The repressive apparatus orchestrated all the gestures as rituals of punitive omnipotence for the prisoners, they were grotesque performances of decrepitude and human promiscuity If the torturers consciously assumed the role of manipulators of human puppets, thus legitimizing their power as "directors," the prisoners were both spectators and actors justifiably horrified by the parts they were forced to act

One witness whose testimony is based on his experience with the satanic reeducation programs of Pitesti and Gherla in the Transylvania region of Romania, maintained that the reeducators (torturers) were bedeviled and possessed Thus for him, the reeducation was essentially a metaphysical phenomenon It went beyond torture and became a confrontation between Christians and those possessed by Satan The witness described the torturers as a Satanic sect noting that Eugen Turcanu the "Great Re-Educator" and leader of the Pitesti experiment, was a "decayed angel," demonically intelligent having the haughtiness of Lucifer, "rabid" with violence and "drunk" on the power of becoming Master The witness explained the ritual of the victims' dehumanization "The torturers had in view the dehumanization and possession of the human being, because all those who passed through the Pitesti and Gherla prisons became possessed Some of them namely those who scrupulously executed the orders of the guards were irrevocably possessed, while others, despite suffering continuous terror, recovered after some time " This testimony is chiefly relevant to the blasphemic rituals which took place at Christmas and Easter, which were always accompanied by Satanic rhetoric during the Pitesti reeducation experiments

The reeducators designed the Christmas of 1950 as a ceremony of ingesting feces accompanied by "Satanic choral songs" or scabrous Christmas carols On the day of Epiphany, the reeducators executed another satanic ceremony, where the christening was desacralized by using urine as holy water Easter of 1951 was consecrated in Pitesti prison as an Anti-Easter the prisoners were forced to make crosses from torture tools, the scabrous Christmas carols were replaced by a vulgar funeral service of Christ, and prisoners were forced to cross the cell on their knees for the entire Week of Passion, each of them carrying a cross From them, the torturers chose a symbolic Christ crowned with thorns It is important to note that, apart from a blasphemous prison theatricality, the torturers could not avoid the profoundly transfigured essence of Easter Even if the ritual was blasphemous at an oral and gestural level the prisoners literally lived a sort of obscene "Imitatio Christi, " albeit, a grotesque one Other witnesses remembered scenes of a perverted crucifixion and a "baptism in the privy " In fact the parody of all religious ceremonies was emblematic of the reeducation in Pitesti prison, but the most important was the "phallus ceremony" of Easter In this ceremony, "the shirt of Christ" was made by a bed sheet dirty with feces, the key of this scene being a sort of totem phallus which the victims were forced to adore It was not, of course, a primitive fertility ceremony, but was rather intended to pervert the content of the Resurrection, the Resurrection in spirit was replaced by an abject one, the Resurrection as defecation Remembering the famous expression of one remarking on the apogee of horror in Auschwitz, I should note that Pitesti prison was another "annus mundi " From an anatomic point of view, the torturers opposed to the head and heart all the organs considered to be impure and inferior Sometimes, even the Holy Mother was represented during the Black Mass as a feminine sex organ, carved in a bar of soap, on which the prisoners were forced to mimic intercourse

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If the theatricality of torture was the norm in Pitesti prison the reeducators believed that watching the torture had a "pedagogic" effect, seeing the other being tortured was often cathartic in the Aristotelian sense, because the victim's feelings were fear and pity only perverted Another witness explained that when the reeducators began the collective beating of their victims, they manifested a sort of warrior fury that looked like a "dance of cannibals, before eating"

The same Easter of 1951 was experienced as a "performance of salvation" by the prisoners from the camp of Baia Sprie in northern Romania A resurrection in the mines there was performed as an improvised show in the catacombs But this show was also intensely lived The descent into the abyss by the prisoner/miners symbolized an inverted mounting of Golgotha the bells were substituted by drills, the mine vaults were church cupolas, the miner lamps were candles, and the prisoners had even prepared Eucharist bread

After this "performance of salvation," some of those who had been operating as informers confessed renouncing their collaboration with the repressive apparatus and all the prisoners dreamed of their families For all of them, the most important factor of the performance was an auditory one the sound of the drill-bells An analogous Easter took place in the camp/mine of Cavnic also in northern Romania in 1953 The Easter light came from the miner s lamps, but the sound of bells was obtained by striking the drills arranged in a sort of hanging cembalo All those who participated in such ecumenical "performances" in prisons or camps confessed to being transfigured by the event, seeing only collective prayer as a return (in time) of the first Christians in the catacombs The body itself, the one which was so abjectly utilized in the Black Mass during the Pitesti prison reeducation, now became a substitute for the altar

Remembering the Christmas of 1958, a former woman prisoner described how the political prisoners manufactured the Christ child from soap the manger from mattress straw and the night with stars from a tissue The imprisoned women were spiritually closer to Christmas, because the holy birth reminded them of their own motherhood But the performances in the Romanian Gulag not only referred to the production of the great Christian festivities One of the witnesses related in detail the "production" of a 1959 New Year's Eve show performed by political prisoners It was a collective work in which "actors," "directors," and "script-writers" all participated They had rehearsals conceiving a penitentiary performance about the prisoner s life in the Romanian Gulag The show also included sarcastic portrayals of the repressive apparatus (guards and officers), and it was explicitly ironic in the style of a lampoon denouncing the authorities

To the "art of performance" in the Romanian Gulag also belongs the "Ring Dance of the Bonnets," as remembered by another female prisoner apparently a childish game, it was in fact a macabre dance that had the effect of an exorcism Women of all ages who lived in the same cell turned and danced with increasing intensity, as each woman took her bonnet and put it on the head of her neighbor More than dance it became a whirlpool that ended only because of cautiousness and exhaustion The Ring Dance of the Bonnets was a well-known game in the prisons for women one that relieved the prisoners of both their physical and psychological suffering The younger women really were "playing" and the older women forgot their suffering and a bit of the misery of old age in prison During one New Year's Eve performance, women succeeded in producing a prison "carnival," complete with theater scenes, fashion shows, disguises and a masked ball

At the borderline between performance and torture there were many other staged scenes in the Romanian Gulag such as "taking the bath" which was orchestrated by guards as a ceremony of punitive omnipotence and was experienced by the political prisoners as a grotesque revelation of human promiscuity and decrepitude If the turnkeys aspired to a performance of nude marionettes, verifying their power as directors, then the prisoners were the horrified actors appalled by the parts they played For the majority of witnesses, the bath had the effect of a thermal shock for the alternative inferno of boiling and freezing

The ceremony of feeding at the Gulag was yet another opportunity for humiliation and torture because it seemed to be a quasi-mystical ritual performed by a procession of famished and starving human beings The political prisoners became a "herd of men-pigs," or at least the members of the repressive apparatus wanted to see them this way Michele Foucault in fact describes a similar convoy of jailbirds and their "Saturnalia of Punishment" The political prisoner of the Romanian Gulag had a theatricality of faith that disciplined him Sometimes he played little games to pass the time and animate his cell But when the theatricality belonged to the oppressors, it was always a matter of torture

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102-107

On Caging, Terror and Flesh

An Interview with Fassih Keiso*

What were the core issues—political, aesthetic, theoretical—that you were exploring in *Caging, Terror and Flesh*?

Aesthetically, the body is the main subject/object of my work in general, and particularly of my photography, performance, video and installation. During the wars in Lebanon, I started doing nude photography in Beirut while I was studying art, searching for an aesthetic language of the body inside the war machine that was crushing the Lebanese and Palestinian refugees. The subject captured my mind and soul, and from that time the human body became the theme of my artwork. I have been investigating it theoretically and practically wherever I live or work, here in Australia or New York, Lebanon or Syria.

I was trying to take the body in *Caging, Terror and Flesh* to its maximum strength and at the same time not to be exploitative like the guards at Abu Ghraib prison. When I started photographing the human body in Lebanon I was trying to stress the beauty and the sublime inside the violence and death that was surrounding us and that dominated that period in Lebanon. *Caging, Terror and Flesh* reveals the contemporary barbaric attitude toward the human body. In addition, I was trying to explore how technology has been used to subdue humanity, as well as the function of media and contemporary culture in perverting humanity.

In *Caging, Flesh and Terror*, my aim was to highlight the abuse of the human body. Because the subject is highly political—and the politics predominate—the humanistic side is what I intended to achieve in my performance. The Iraqi actors/volunteers who participated in the performance succeeded in pushing the performance toward the humanistic side. Particularly effective was one scene where the prisoner/musician was playing the lute while blindfolded and another other scene where all the detainees were chained, while the audience hears an Iraqi melody song breaking the silence, sang live by one of the prisoners/actors. All these scenes that contain lute-playing and singing were not my ideas or intentions; the Iraqi group improvised these scenes, and I gave the green light for them to be performed.

How does your own experience as a Syrian-Australian artist inform *Caging, Terror and Flesh*, and what is your perspective on the "global war on terror"?

I was born in the northeast of Syria, near the Iraqi and Turkish borders. My father flew in the massacre that happened in Turkey during the second decade of the last century. What is happening now in Iraq and what I experienced in Lebanon are part of a continuing cycle of violence that my ancestors went through. I hope to keep my own two children, born in Australia, away from this cycle.

I am Syrian by birth, but I moved to Beirut when I was 18 years old and lived there for 18 years. I then moved to Australia, so my culture is a mixture of many cultures. In the place of my birth, Arabic culture mixed with Syriac, Assyrian, Kurdish, Armenian and Bedouin cultures. In Lebanon there was a mixture of religions there. I experienced Arabic culture, which is heavily influenced by Western culture. Then living inside Western culture, I experienced what I call the ironic period, where my culture became more Arabic than Western—particularly since September 11 and its aftermath, from Afghanistan to Iraq and Palestine to the recent war between Israel and the Lebanese Resistance.

Caging, Terror and Flesh came as a result of the last period and as result of the Western media game against Muslims and Arabs. What surprised me most was that the majority of the public in the West followed the media and trusted their governments. According to Bush, the politics that divide humankind are just reduced to good and evil—as in Hollywood movies! So as an Arab I was categorised as evil. Living in the West, this meant that I had to prove the opposite—to prove that I was good. Proving that you are not a terrorist is now the aim of Muslims and Arabs, particularly those who live in the West. The term "war on terror" was developed out of an orientalist theory supported by Hollywood images, which are all fantasy and not related to reality.

Caging, Terror and Flesh might be said to be a restructuring of my personal experience in another way as well. During the Lebanese war I was arrested at a check point, hooded for hours and questioned. In Sweden, when I was seeking refugee status 30 years ago, running from Lebanon in search of "freedom" in the West, Swedish police stripped me and put me in jail for a week, and subjected me to some physical pain. They flipped me upside down and sent me back by force to the Damascus airport in the company of two police officers. Later in Syria, I did the military service as a lieutenant.

Can you discuss those who participated in the performance?

My strategy was similar to a military strategy in that it depended on the participants and the circumstances. The idea of the performance developed from the time I started thinking about it, and it changed every time someone called to participate in or withdraw from the performance.

As an artist who creates performances, I have to deal with the people involved in the actions, meeting them, talking by phone or communicating via the Internet. My roles are to direct them and set the stage. Here, the stage was a prison, and my role now became the person in charge of the prison. So automatically, I assumed the role of the prison officer (the artist or director). As my role let me go in and out of the cage, I was responsible for bringing prisoners or soldiers (performers) while the others participated in the action. In addition, I took photographs and video and participated in humiliating the prisoners whenever I found it necessary. At the same time, I worked both lighting and sound. This position put me in control of the work, the same way any military officer has control over something or a guard has control over prisoners.

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* Guest editor Jon McKenzie conducted an email interview with artist Fassih Keiso about his performance *Caging, Terror and Flesh*, produced in Sydney, Australia in August 2005.

I started the performance at twelve noon with three volunteers, two of them playing the role of prisoners and a third one the role of soldier. I also took the role of soldier. After an hour the five Iraqis arrived to participate in the performance. Three performed as prisoners and two as soldiers. I asked the director Mounir al-Obaidi to be a soldier so I could coordinate with him to create the scenes. Each individual participant had different reactions to engaging in the performance as a prisoner or soldier. I noticed that one of the soldiers was very panicked, for example, when his girlfriend took the role of prisoner, allowing herself to be pulled by the hair, hooded and handcuffed.

Because of the increasing numbers of Iraqi refugees in Sydney, the five Iraqis were trying to form a theatre group with some others. They had been used to acting on a classical stage in a theatre and had no idea what it meant to perform in a visual arts space with no seats and stage. In several meetings, I had to try hard to explain the nature of performances that happen in a space like Artspace, and to define the concept of 'performing art' and the nature of the audience that comes to see these performances. But the five Iraqis also helped to take the performance down a different path.

How did you approach the power relations in the performance, and do you have any thought about artists assuming the role of military figures?

If you notice in the photograph I used for the flyer, it is me topless, blindfolded, with my mouth taped. At the start, I was thinking that I'd be the victim and have a solo performance. Then, when I started collecting information, text and photographs about Abu Ghraib, I was stunned by the images on the Internet and thought: What would happen if I did the opposite of what I see in the images? The Arab/Iraqi performers would take the role of the guards and the Americans/Westerners would become the prisoners. From there, I decided to rewrite the proposal and change the roles. I (an Arab) would play the role of a military figure, and the Westerners would be the prisoners. Later on, the theme became more humanistic by setting aside the direct cultural and political conflicts between East and West. The main problem of the performance became: What do you feel if your body is humiliated or tortured, to what extent can your body handle pain?

A female prisoner involved in the last hour of the performance told me that she was ready for any kind of violence and asked me to pull her on the ground by her hair and push her on the ground aggressively. So, I grabbed her hair and pushed her inside the cage in a violent way, pulled her body on the ground and asking one of the soldiers to tape her mouth and blindfold her. My actions surprised and shocked the prisoners and soldiers. I felt this at the time and some audience asked later how could I have done that. Their response arose because the performance had been running softly and then suddenly became very literal but still for the audience very effective. I heard this response from some of the audience, including a journalist who tried hard to put some of the images in a well-known Australian newspaper—with no success.

Slavoj Žižek has described Abu Ghraib as a ritualised initiation of Iraqis into the underbelly of American culture. From your perspective, does he have it right, or might the initiation be into contemporary western culture more broadly?

In my opinion, Abu Ghraib is a media invention influenced by a culture of violence and the sex industry, and not organized by the American political administration. But I also believe that the 'war on terror' and American (Western) political strategies influenced the people in charge in the prison to express their power in an extreme manner. Nudity in public is not part of Arab culture. I think stripping prisoners before they get inside their cells is a Western practice and is not part of prison practice in the Arab world. This technique of forced nudity has also been used by Israeli soldiers in Palestine when searching for suspected suicide bombers. However, sex, masturbation and sodomy are all part of human culture and not Western culture in particular. In Abu Ghraib these became westernised (Americanised) by being documented and sold to the media. In other words, by taking photographs or filming the action it becomes Western culture.

Having sexual pleasure is a hidden part in Arab culture; it is very personal and most people do it secretly. Arabic culture and literary history is full of sex stories, sexual adventures and medical advice about sex. Homosexual culture was and still is part in Arab sexual culture and fantasy. The pornographic industry is a Western trend and nowadays this trend finding its way in Arabic society through satellite broadcasting, media and Internet. I don't think Abu Ghraib is therefore a ritualised initiation of Arabs into Western culture. The media and the internet are more advanced and effective tools that spread this culture around the globe. The entertainment at Abu Ghraib was like entertainment during Greco-Roman antiquity, selling the images to the media for profit.

How successful was the performance for you? What responses did you get?

And would you make any changes if you were to stage it again?

I found that the Australian art scene and the Australian audience are not into this kind of political and aggressive work to be presented as art In Australia, art institutions prefer not to deal with political performance art particularly if the work has no direct relation to Australian politics I noticed that the only political subject acceptable in a work of art is migration, but not the question of detainees who came to Australia illegally years ago and are now still in detention centres So there was little support for a subject that supported the Arabs and criticised Western democracy and Australia's allies Australians also don t like to see people tortured or chickens and animals slaughtered onstage but they accept photographs of violence and horror films, and they eat cooked animal meat

Caging, Terror and Flesh was not a success It pushed me to the edge of Australian Art — that is what I feel every time I close a show or finish a performance that deals with Arab culture — because my work is heavily culturally based and always defending Arab culture and critical of the Western view of the 'other' The work received no critical or newspaper reviews

The people who work at Artspace were very impressed by the performance as they said after the show I do not receive this kind of response from all the galleries' staff where I exhibit or perform and it is encouraging and nice to hear The same positive comment came from a group of Arab audiences and a poet whose poetry I had used in several work including this one

I do believe that American politics frightens people outside America more than inside the States For example last week I was proposing a video projection about the issue of empires and archaeology in the Arab region I was criticizing what I called the American empire and I was told to cut this from my proposal When I went to Syria and Lebanon in 2004 to organize few shows I presented my artwork to one of the commercial gallery in Damascus The owner of the gallery said Your work is good, but why did you do this performance about Abu Ghraib?" I heard the same comment in Beirut as well

I have lost interest in staging this performance again I barely talk about this work

You surprised me by following up with me about this performance If an art organization took the responsibility of producing the work, including inviting volunteers I might become interested in it again I want the work to go to extremes in humiliating the body I want the participants to be from public, I want them to experience the torture as long as they can whether for a minute or for hours I am no longer interested in using professional actors

Can you describe how this performance related to your previous work, and what have you worked on since?

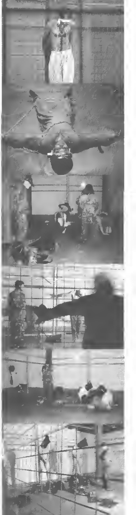
Caging, Terror and Flesh continues the main theme of all my previous artwork, the body, nudity, sexuality, mortality and identity, and difference Working within an international context, I use the human body in my work as subject and object My previous performances work focused on the issue of wars and cultural difference I raise the question of my identity representation and cultural conflicts Throughout my artwork, I critically examine Arab eroticism, identity, history and contemporary politics I produce a political art that articulates resistance to conflicts and stereotypes within Western politics and other dominant powers My performances are oppositional

Since I presented this performance, I have struggled to have a show in Australia and have shown my work in Arab countries instead In 2005, I had five events in Damascus and Beirut a selection of some of the work I produced in Australia and New York in the last 10 years I also did a performance in Damascus in collaboration with a surgeon In front of the audience the surgeon made live cuts in my body to take five fat lumps and stitch the skin back For the last eight years I had been trying to present this performance in Australia but I had no luck finding a surgeon who would agree to collaborate with me Currently, I am fluctuating between the two places—Syria and Australia, and specifically between Melbourne and al-Hasakha, the place of my birth where my father found refuge during the Armenian massacre in 1915 He left me an apartment where I am thinking of moving both my art space and my residence, a space where I'll be the person in charge who will decide whether my work is acceptable or not As you say in English " cross your fingers"

Are there any questions you have for me?

Yes, there is one question I think I asked it before Why did you do this interview with me?

I was researching Abu Ghraib from a variety of perspectives—the White House "torture memos," the history of CIA interrogation techniques, the role of media and information systems, and also how artists have engaged the events at Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo, and elsewhere. When I discovered the documentation of *Caging, Terror and Flesh* at the Artspace site, I wanted to know more about you and your work, since I am interested in how artists approach the positions of torturer/tortured, interrogator/interrogated As I had been invited to guest edit this issue of *Frakcija*, I thought that an interview with you would contribute to our exploration of visibility, security, and civil liberties



O Jailer!*

O jailer!
O darkness of my cell!
Your darkness will dispel
And your injustice will vanish!
The breeze of tomorrow will forget me not!

Were it not for my mother whom I left in a distant place
Were it not for my yearning to my birthplace,
I would not stand at the window of my cell
And sing in this forsaken hell

"O mother! The soldiers stand between us!
The longer they lock me inside,
The more I do you pride!
You suckled me the milk of honor, O mother
It is easier to die in the slammer,
than to shame you!"

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[*] A song written and recorded by Damascus based artist Samih Choukeir. It was played during the performance of *Caging: Terror and Flesh* between scenes and when the space was dark. The lyrics are translated here from Arabic.

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Actor / Spectator between Oppression and Expression

Marin Blažević

will start from the assumption that some of the questions which the *Constant Capture* conference s raising can be approached and discussed by means of comparative analysis of the two particular, multimedia theatrical performances – the *Fifth Gospel* directed by Branko Brezovec and *Deleted Messages* by performance company BADco. In their own fashion, these performances are dealing with the pressing issues such as social and political surveillance, manipulation and repression, human rights violations, terrorism, war crimes, civil liberties, strategies of resistance, the manifestation and span of individual freedom. The essay will rely on the arguably still vital *theatrum mundi* metaphor which attributes the features of theatre to the idea, perception and image of the world (as a *stage where every man must play a part*). It will consider mechanisms and effects of functioning and developing of the representational situation that theatrical performance establishes through the complex relations between the performer/actor and the spectator.

More precisely, I will analyse the strategies of inversion of the actor-spectator correlation that the *Fifth Gospel* and *Deleted Messages* implement and experiment with. In their own way, both performances place the spectator in the position of the one who is video-recorded or captured by the gaze from the stage and monitored by the actors/performers, literally manipulated and intimidated by their physical acts or imprisoned into a scenery which represents a concentration camp barrack and exposed to the aggression of extreme sounds and images. What is more, one of the performances brings the spectator face to face with the freedom of expression, verbal and physical communication, i.e. with the call for the actual participation, the challenge *to perform* in the organised environment of aesthetic performance, *or else* – to submit to repression of theatrical convention.

The analysis will be carried through two overlapping dimensions of performance – *performance text* and *performance flow*. I will arbitrarily try to make a distinction between these two dimensions hoping to bring the challenges of this essay into sharper focus. The first notion, *performance text*, I adopt from the semiotics of theatre which attempted to correlate and integrate all sign-systems of the performance, primarily understood as a signifying practice, into a kind of *macro-sign*, a virtual *textual whole* composed of all elements of signification, verbal and non-verbal alike (De Marinis). *Representational situation* (Eco), *referential function* (Alter), *mise en scène* (Pavis) are among the distinctive aspects of the *performance text* whether it is composed within the paradigm of dramatic or *post-dramatic* (Lehmann) theatre. The second notion, *performance flow*, primarily refers to the actual happening and mere course of performance and its physical, fluctuating, contingent nature which has the potential to disrupt representation, derogate representability, resist the *economy of reproduction* (Phelan) and even escape the shelter of referentiality. Naturally, the *flow* of performance has to do with the presence of living/performing bodies, the process, running, dynamics, tensions and intensities as well as the technique of their *immediately actual* (States) actions.

I

The first challenge will be to compare the referential dimensions and the connotative range of *performance texts* in the recent works of Brezovec and BADco.[1]

Five years ago the first performance of the *Fifth Gospel* was given in Hamburg, in the renowned Theaterfabrik Kampnagel. A few weeks later the performance moved to Zagreb. Branko Brezovec leaned his *mise en scène* against a text written by Slobodan Šnajder.[2] The text of the *Fifth Gospel*, Šnajder explains, is based on the "several motives from the diary by Ilija Jakovljević *Concentration Camp on the River Sava* as a memento of the history which is blocked out, and, being blocked out does not want to pass".[3]

How to represent the terror, suffering, atrocity? How to embody physical, mental and emotional pain of the true sufferer? How to cope with the sense that traumatic experience of historical figures in a specific historical situation – the experience of concentration camp inmates – was so extreme that any attempt to find an adequate mode of its representation and expression might inadvertently turn out to be deficient, therefore even in danger of being perceived as lacking respect for the victims of the *historical real*? These were not only aesthetical but also ethical challenges that the performance of the *Fifth Gospel* had to face.

Far away from ritualised commemoration or historical reconstruction and documentary realism, the performance of the *Fifth Gospel* followed the experience of another survivor of Jasenovac, literary historian Antun Barac, who described the "reality" of the concentration camp as being "hallucinatory". It seems that Barac's description was Brezovec's mainspring for a further exploration of his paradoxical *intra-cultural* (Bharucha) *hyper-theatre*, which I have elsewhere described at greater length.[4] Basically, intensification, concentration, grotesque radicalisation and unscrupulous contamination of diverse styles, genres, modes, techniques, conventions of theatrical representation in the end might lead to series of *dis-representational* – Brezovec himself would prefer to say *iconoclastic* – effects, or rather attacks on the referential tissue of performance, composition and completeness of the theatrical *image*, but also the bodies of its performers. *Hyper-theatre* might get turned against

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[1] Brezovec, for already three decades, and the BADco in recent years have been the representatives of the so-called *new theatre* or even *performance-theatre*, a kind of *counter-praxis* which – with its roots back into the time of the historical avant-gardes – has been contesting the dominant tradition of theatrical representation in Croatian as well as in European/Western theatrical *landscapes*. To put it simply, the *new theatre counter-paradigm* is born and developed out of the aesthetic-political resistance towards the dramatic-literary and mimetic-realist theatre material means, mechanisms, performative strategies and ideological function of such representation and its social reproductive institution. After the fundamental breakup which occurred around the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the theatre, only just emancipated (*re-theatricalised*) from literature and drama, found itself faced with the task of self reflection, new self-foundation or eventual self-abolishment. Recently Hans-Thies Lehmann marked a "caesura of media-society" in the late 60's and early 70's and launched the notion of *Postdramatisches Theater (postdramatic theatre)*, a kind of paradigm within the (*new theatre*) paradigm. There is no space, nor need for argumentation and critique of the two controversial notions (*new-* and *post-*). On this occasion I am just using them as tools and hints of the *theatrescapes*.

[2] Slobodan Šnajder, one of the most prominent Croatian contemporary dramatist, was a kind of dissident during the nineties, in time of authoritarian regime of Franjo Tudman.

[3] In November 1941 Ilija Jakovljević, a writer, journalist and lawyer, together with a group of other, mostly Croatian professors, scholars and intellectuals, was deported to the Kazneni Zavod Stara Gradiška, the second largest camp within the complex of concentration and extermination camps Jasenovac, founded by the so-called Independent State of Croatia, in fact a fascist puppet state completely subordinated to the interests of the Third Reich and fascist Italy. Tens of thousands of Jews, Serbs, Gipsies, as well as Croats, "adversaries" of the Ustaše regime, were put to death in Jasenovac – shot or slaughtered. Ilija Jakovljević survived Jasenovac. He was released in December 1942, in 1944 he even joined the Resistance lead by the Croatian and Yugoslavian Communist party, but four years later he did not survive the prison Glavinjača, where he was imprisoned, without any charges, by the Yugoslavian communist authorities. There are indications that he was killed although the official report stated that he had committed suicide by hanging! Almost half a century later his diary was saved from oblivion and published for the first time.

[4] See "DIRECTOR vs. ACTOR or Matula vs. Brezovec" (in *Frakcija* 20/21, 2001), "Theatre Doubts" (in *Frakcija* 28/29, 2003), "Dying Bodies, Living Corpses: transition, nationalism and resistance in Croatian theatre" (in *Contemporary Theatres in Europe*, eds. J. Kelleher and N. Ridout, Routledge, London and New York, 2006).

Fifth Gospel, photo: Sandra Vitale

theatre itself[4] as long as the theatre is conceived to be, above all, a media serving to produce signs and transfer meaning, let alone an (*ancillary*) art form meant for staging the dramatic text, which is, furthermore, before all considered to be a discursive construction of the narrative and characters, the whole fictional world as a matter of fact. Although Brezovec's theatre never denies enactment nor strives to *delete* all of its *messages* – on the contrary, it even animatedly fuels interpretative (mis)readings, awareness of cultural idiosyncrasies and responsibility for referential actualisations[5] – it is nevertheless tenacious in stressing their inadequacy and drawing attention to potentials of (even theatrical) performance above and beyond its share in representation. The *Fifth Gospel* inexorably reveals the *hallucinatory* world of extreme terror, the complete annulment not just of human rights (let alone the civil liberties) but of the humaneness itself – the dehumanised condition which, in the end, can only be represented metaphorically, by metamorphosis of *homo sapiens* into flesh-eating plant. However, the ethical challenge of the performance is only partially dealt with *performance text*.

Disassembling of the mechanisms of violence, vivisection of the psychological profiles of the characters – whether of tormentors and criminals or their victims – crushed in the pathological social situation, seems to be meaningful but still a side issue in terms of performance ethics. It is my feeling that, initially, the performance is not banking on actor's identifications with the protagonists of *historical fiction*, nor spectator's empathic immersion in the symbiosis of actor and character. Already the *hyper-theatrical dis-representational* attacks obstruct that kind of approach to the materials, narratives and subjects of the representation. I would argue that the acting in *Fifth Gospel* re-directs focus from its referential horizon to the performance of acting, that is to the very fact and act of acting, and to the actor as the executor of acting performance. Here, actors do not just over-work themselves in their effort to survive the *hyper-theatrical* machinery – moreover, they are faced with extremely difficult, I would say even traumatic representational tasks which inevitably and at some points even visibly induce resistance in their performance. They are not just expected to enact individuals involved in inexpressible atrocities. What is more, through the performance some of them are expected to appear in different roles, now acting as concentration camp inmates and in another scene as their torturers and murderers. That multiplication of identities (historical, fictionalised historical, actor's personal) within the *iconoclastic spirals* of *hyper/dis-theatre*, first through the dramaturgical twists but then also in the mirrors which are the basic element of the stage design, as also the pressure of representation and performance of tragedy which is not just made on myth, seems to induce a kind of inner actor's conflict.

It is the devoted, affected but also – at particular moments – evidently resistant actor's work, her/his struggle to withstand the mimetic empathy (perhaps even fear from being totally possessed by its force), that wins respect and inserts into grotesque, at times even regressive performance, the wedge of peculiar *pathos* of performance, the mainspring of compassion on the side of the spectator embedded in this theatrical(ised) pandemonium. This effect of acting already raises the issue of *performance flow*. But, before that, I will take a look at the *performance text* of – *Deleted Messages*.

I guess that the title of the performance already suggests its refusal of theatrical representation which would mainly be focused on the series of *semioses* and creation of the more or less predictable, transparent and coherent *performance text*. "We made an effort to cancel any thematic perspective", explained the director of the *Deleted Messages* Goran Sergej Pristaš. Thus, apart from a few hints of the possible referential horizon, there is no line of narrative to follow and interpret, no fictional world to (re)construct, no illusion machine to maintain, no literary or dramatic text to *translate* (*from page to stage*), no iconicity to recognize or to identify with – not even fragmented, fractured, dispersed.

Compared to Brezovec's spectacular *hyper-theatrical* (then at its highest *dis-representational*) machinery and referential immersion into local (Croatian) histories – the war trauma (World War Two and its relapses in the recent wars on the territory of Former Yugoslavia) and the experience of various totalitarian regimes through most of the 20th century – *Deleted Messages* would leave an impression of a de-contextualised and almost non/anti-referential series of happenings, if it were not for several textual sequences projected on one of the three screens (which addresses the issue of epidemic and quarantine) and the feedback of autoreferentiality, the key strategy of the *new/post-dramatic* theatre, the persistent focusing of attention on the fact of the act (not necessarily acting) in the *performance flow*, bending over the processes and challenges of (inter) action between the performer and spectator, insisting on the viability of performance even when its primary function is not to serve the development of representation, when it does not refer to anything but itself, its time, space and performing bodies, its *flow*. And yet, as we shall see in a little while, the performance of *Deleted Messages* was not simply moved with the flow.

II

No less than the ambiguous actors' performance – at the same time over-strung and reluctant, even offering resistance – the challenge of the performance of *Fifth Gospel* (and its ethics) was also another question how to *capture* the spectator? What kind of performance strategies, power regime, mechanisms of surveillance, images of terror and stimulus of affectation have to be invented, released and (re)produced in order to awake in the spectator a (physical) sense of repression, danger, fear, dismay, a *constant capture*?

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[5] Lest we forget the fact that during the recent war in Bosnia the military forces and parastate authorities of Bosnian Croats, sponsored by the Croatian government, have been involved in the foundation of concentration camps for imprisonment of Bosnian Muslims.

The performance of the *Fifth Gospel* takes place inside a kind of claustrophobic container, a dynamic multimedia, multilayered stage-installation of sorts, a "tunnel of horror" as it was described by one reviewer The inside of the container is covered with mirrors The two groups of spectators are placed, or rather confronted on the two seating rostrums, on the opposite sides of the container Most of the acting is performed in the playing area between the two seating rostrums The playing area is constantly transforming through the use of lighting effects, projections of the animated film material, various interpolations (elements of scenery break through the unfolded side-walls and re-build the space) by moving of the rostrum Although of incomparably smaller dimensions (on the two rostrums there is a space for no more than 50 people!), the stage-installation echoes some ideas of the Walter Gropius project "total theatre", which the Bauhaus director has designed for Erwin Piscator "the aim is" writes Gropius, ' to draw the spectator in theatrical event so that he can become integral part of the scene of action, where the 'curtain' will no longer make the escape/exit' possible '

Naturally, all the following features of the performance *Fifth Gospel* are subject to *semiotization* and the challenges of interpretation We could say that the container-installation, where spectators are literally imprisoned, represents the concentration camp barrack (there is no way out except across the scaffold of the playing area) We could figure that the moving seating rostrum, with squeezed spectators, resembles the deportation trains ("of death") Or we could perceive the (endless) multiplication, overlapping, blending of our own, both spectator's and actor's reflections in the "barrack of mirrors" as a visual metaphor of the efficiency of the concentration camp infernal machinery a suggestion of erasure of identities, distortion, transformation of individual bodies into the heap of reflections-shadows-corpses ultimately into the biological material, or, on the other hand, a suggestion of the repression of gaze(s) and constant mutual surveillance

But now, I would like to examine what quality, or what power the performance of *Fifth Gospel*, the running of its *hyper* or *total* theatrical machine, produces and achieves aside from or outside the *text*, what kind of sensations – or *organic experiences* (as conceived by Gavella) – are aroused in the spectator by the *performance flow*? (As *if*) imprisoned in the barrack, (as *if*) crammed in the freight car, her/his freedom of movement (that is – leaving the theatre) being deprived, her/his body being made passive and subjected to manipulation of the machine, then faced with the endless (dis)appearances of her/his own reflection(s) as also reflections of everybody else in the mirror container – all that inevitably makes many spectators feel uneasy Moreover the whole theatrical machinery (from the moving elements of stage design and frantic assembling of light-, film- and sound- attractions to the singing and dancing actors) performs a massive and combined audio-visual attack on the perceptive endurance of the spectator The aggressive performance may cause various organic reactions ranging from exhaustion or nausea, even disgust, to anxiety, even panic But Brezovec is aware of affective (and then also reflective) potential of theatre which can induce much more complex experiences Performances of the *Fifth Gospel* were attempts to generate them through the interdependent strategies of inter-action between the actor and spectator However, even though they challenge theatrical convention, those strategies are never meant to break the *theatrical frame* (Goffman) nor overwhelm the *psychological proscenium* (Suvin)

The distance between the actors and spectators is drastically downsized and in some parts of the performance (let's not forget that the seating rostrum moves during the performance) the playing area is reduced to just a few square meters And, according to Hans Thise Lehmann, when the distance between the actor and spectator is 'alarmingly' diminished, even so much that the physical and psychological closeness (breath, perspiration, contractions, movements of the muscles, the gaze) overcasts the meaning, the new space emerges, the space of intense centripetal dynamics, the theatre becomes a moment of co-existing energies instead of transfer of signs" The closeness of living organisms ', as Grotowsky would say, enhances the effects of *kinaesthetic empathy* (Martin, Barba) which induces *organic experiences* in the spectator that resemble those of the actor The *alarming closeness* is even more stressed by the accidental or intentional contact of actor s and spectator's body Because of the restricted playing area, it often happens that actors graze the spectators, or have to sidestep their limbs some actors even enter the auditorium space and hold on to spectators' bodies while the rostrum is moving At the beginning of the performance, in complete darkness, actors voices are heard from below, from the inside of the seating rostrum, then they grab spectator's legs, push aside spectator's bodies and literally crawl between them towards the playing area Physical contacts and movements of actors' bodies not only draw spectator's attention to their own physical presence in the performance, but also force her/him react, to move, to make space

Spectator's *corporeal awareness* is further amplified by the effect of the gaze. The effect of the spectator's gaze was given consideration in many theories of acting. For example, the Croatian theatre director and theoretician Branko Gavella came to a conclusion that another's gaze, a spectator's gaze, gives rise to a special attentiveness in the actor, some elated state of consciousness that wants to seize control over the functioning of the entire organism, remove automation from everyday re-actions, experiencing and behaviour, change posture and stance before the observer, bring all sensations and emotions into the *centre of consciousness*, that is, the *focus of attention*. We can assume that the similar re-action happens in the opposite case, when the spectator is placed in the position of the one who is captured by the gaze from the stage. Through the performance of *Fifth Gospel* actors do not just occasionally fix their eyes upon the faces of the spectators and monitor their behaviour. Moreover, at some point the actors threaten the spectators, intensifying the repressiveness of the gaze by targeting the lamp light towards selected spectators, pressed in the dark of the *barrack or death train*. What is going to happen? What is to be done? The spectators are forced to look away, bow down their heads, or try to endure the actor's gaze, resist the oppressiveness of the (peculiar) theatrical situation.

Brezovec's performance is not just an example of theatre preoccupied with the theme of terror, but also an exploration of the challenges of performance that emerge when theatre and terror are set into different relations – *theatre of terror* and *terror of theatre*. When it comes to the *Fifth Gospel*, the theatricalised aggression is concurrent with the aggression of theatricalisation, at times even extreme pressure of the hierarchical structure of the representational situation. The *total theatre* threatens to turn into a *totalitarian theatre*. The potential final effect of that strategy might look unexpected. Facing the (theatricalised) terror in theatre, but also experiencing the terror of theatre, the spectator might ultimately evoke the sense of resistance that we have already detected in actors performance. Paradoxically, the efficacy of the *Fifth Gospel* performance seems to be measured not just by the sense, but also by the intensity of resistance it manages to provoke against itself, against its execution.

III

Unlike the *Fifth Gospel, Deleted Messages* seems to be a performance which denies the basic theatrical convention – the divergence of the actor/performer and spectator/observer – and creates an environment of freedom of communication and inter-action, even the role reversal between the spectator and performer. Six performers and the audience share an undivided, though not undefined performance space – a rectangle of white textile is ironed together over the floor and a number of thin aluminium rods suspended in midair. Depending on the agility of the spectators, the space transforms as the performance progresses – the cloth gets torn apart, rods thrown around with the ringing sounds of their irregular collisions. Moving freely, conversing, performing their own inclusion in or exclusion from the process of predominantly *here and now* creation, the spectators seem to be allowed to define the level of interaction by themselves. They can even change the flow of performer's movement through the space and collectively choreograph the performing bodies. It is almost impossible to see and hear all that is happening in the performance space, between performers, performers and spectators, even the spectators themselves. This extends the freedom of choosing one's own perspective and the possibility for creation of many different (micro-)performances.

It looks like that oppressive, potentially even totalitarian theatre of Brezovec's *Fifth Gospel* is here finally *deleted* and replaced with a freedom of (public) expression, from speech to physical action. The performers of *Deleted Messages* make a step forward in exploring the strategies of active, physical involvement of the spectator in the performance: they do not hesitate to get into a direct verbal or non-verbal communication, they follow the spectator, imitate her or his movements, place her or him in the focus of happening. However, neither the performance of *Deleted Messages* can evade (as a matter of fact, I would say it even provokes) the spectatorial *malaise*. On the one side, the performance of *Deleted Messages* depends on the willingness of the spectators to inter-act with the performers, which makes it extremely vulnerable, under constant threat of collapse. On the other side, its insistence on the creation of the atmosphere of participatory necessity (even if the participation is manifested as a demonstrative refusal to participate) can easily produce a paradoxical effect – a different, yet again normative, even repressive performative situation.

Furthermore, even though the performance works on the impression of even radical theatrical liberalism (almost *no-theatre*), its *flow* indicates the existence of a certain matrix of happening and control of the whole (even if anti-theatrical) event. I have to admit that – while participating in the performance – I was only partly aware of the deliberate structure (even the structure of coincidences) and strategies of fashioning the performance. Then I explored the interactive video version of *Deleted Messages*. The performance was recorded with three cameras that were mobile in the performance space, just like the members of the audience. Here is what I have found out, watching the performance through three different *eyes* and reading textual material presented on the DVD:

[illegible] photo [illegible]

"All the performed material in *Deleted Messages* is based on a genetic protocol taken from the analytical system *Funktionen* by Thomas Lehmen. Each performer enters the performance space with five descriptions of parameters from which they will build concrete performance materials. Each parameter falls into one of the five following categories: 1. type of movement, 2. space, 3. manner, 4. image, 5. relation (towards people and objects in space). The parameters therefore stipulate the overall movement, speech and relations towards audience in space. Throughout the performance the performers either exchange or give singular parameters through a number of fixed situations or situations determined by chance. The dynamics of these exchanges can be followed on the Excel table projected on one of three screens in the space."

But, there is also the fourth camera *watching*. The happening it captures is shown on the central screen. Flickering graphic structures register movements or rather behaviour in the performance space, the processes and dynamics of grouping (inclusion) and isolation (exclusion) of performers – of both actors and spectators. Thus, all the performance activity is, after all, being passivized (shall we also say pacified) in the statics of the medium that only produces the series of images. Technology that enables creation of the images remains irrelevant as long as the ultimate instance of its transmission is – the (frame of the) screen. Compared to the totalitarian regime of the *Fifth Gospel*, the spectator in *Deleted Messages* is enjoying an enormous freedom of performing. Yet that freedom is registered! Preoccupied by their suddenly given right to participate in the performance and the chance to move across the thresholds of theatrical convention, even entertained by the *performance flow*, the spectators-performers may not even become aware of the mechanisms nor strategies of surveillance. Furthermore, what happens after the actual performance? What do the *real* performers do with that visual recording – those performers that have the privilege of knowing more about the structure and strategies of the performance before and after its actual execution? Who ever asked us – the spectators-performers – whether we allow our behaviour, our performance (of freedom?) to be recorded and, after all, reproduced, possibly even manipulated by any kind of media technology, then exposed for analysis, comments or any other kind of exploitation by – others. Did anyone ask us about our *performing rights*?

Finally, to quote from the introduction into DVD version of *Deleted Messages*, a sort of explanation of the (ironic?) *message* submerged by the *performance flow*: "The audience is invited to interact, but not through hard subjectivation of intervention, rather through soft subjectivation of responsiveness to movement. (…) Performance space offers no hard rules for the audience either – elements of space are lines of demarcation, rather than physical barriers – making all rules of conduct self-construed. (…) there is no control other than soft control."

IV

Although it explores some elementary methods of disruption of theatrical convention (representational situation and frame, flexible but continuous proscenium…), Brezovec's performance, just like his theatre in general, never tends to transgress, let alone annul the convention. As much as we are disturbed, even tormented by means of *hyper-theatrical* representation, even clearer might be the awareness that such a strategy may also induce unexpected effects. Namely, this performance does not bend over the threshold of theatrical convention in order to disclose its (seemingly?) unsteady foundations. More than this, the *Fifth Gospel* (as well as other recent Brezovec's performances, such as *Timon of Athens* and *Weddings & Trials*), inexorably, with might and main of the *hyper-theatrical* performance, confronts the spectator with the challenge to become even physically aware of the convention, then perhaps to analytically consider its operation and its possible referential relation to the content and interpretive potential of representation (*performance text*). And after all, with the awareness raised or simply because of being irritated by the performance, the spectator may always – instead of remaining captured by the situation and mechanisms of representation, by the theatrical convention – step out from theatre. But, in the case of this particular performance, that would not simply mean to work one's way through the rows and sneak away into the freedom of the foyer – freedom of the (again, theatricalised) world.

To leave the audience space would mean to burst into the performance space and become a spectator that makes her/his critical attitude ostentatious. It would mean to summon up courage and perform a demonstrative act of resistance, whether towards the theatricalised terror or the terror of theatre. The antagonism towards the performance directed by Brezovec does not have to be perceived as a negative act. Our imaginary spectator-activist would block the flow of performance, obstruct the operation of the theatrical machinery, possibly even cause a momentary collapse of representation, but she or he would also stand out as a critically inclined individual. That would require a different kind of engagement and responsibility than taking a part in the multitude of more or less captivated participants of the *Deleted Messages*.

However, has anyone of the specators of the *Fifth Gospel* had the nerve to actually perform the act of resistance and leave the theatre accross the performance space? That is a disturbing ques-

Fifth Gospel, photo: Sandra Vrdoljc

INFLUENZA
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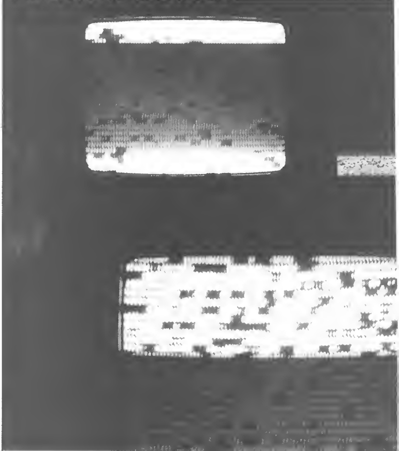
tion. No less disturbing than the next one: what would actors do in case of spectator's interruption of performance? Since the performance of the *Fifth Gospel* is – in the last resort – even looking forward to the spectator's act of physical self-exclusion from theatre, the question arises whether it also leaves room for the actor to develop her/his reaction to spectator's (re)action. Are the actors allowed to intervene in the *performance flow* aside from or even against the representational machine? Brezovec's theatre – thus also the world it represents in the scope of its metaphorical potential – seems to be frightened of the actor-performer falling or even stepping out from the representational frame and direction. When such an incident happens, actors are expected to demonstrate their ingenuity, but only in order to restore the theatre (or, shall we say – illusion) machine, where they will be forced to meet, again, the needs of representation set by the director of the performance. The level of oppressiveness of the representational situation reveals director's doubt about actor's performative potential: her/his capability to do more than step on the threshold of convention and then skilfully perform a backward step. Moving back and forth across the threshold, over and over again, both subverting and restoring the convention – that seems to be a high-risk activity for the representational regime of Brezovec's theatre. However, as long as theatrical performance withholds actor-performer's right to – at least temporary – take up the initiative in challenges and strategies of reconsidering the convention in terms of its concept and operation, as long as it denies actor-performer's right to perform – at least seemingly – *deletion* of the soothing *message* that, after all, *the show must go on*, the *critical gestus* of such performance rapidly deteriorates and its social and political responsibility goes downhill.

120-149

Persistent Resistance



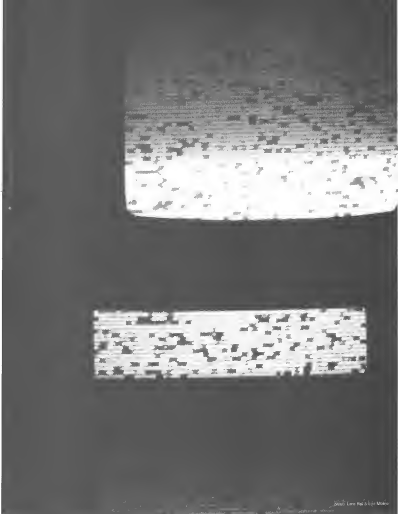


photo Lene Hal & Egil Molne

122-127

A Net Beyond: Visual Media and Communication Technologies in the Next World

Agnese Trocchi

In Italy, the experiences of communities committed to decentralizing visual resources strongly suggest that we are becoming a society where all individuals can express and share their own visions, a society where the meeting of manifold perspectives on the world may change the perception of the world itself But tools alone won t make the difference My analysis starts with my own personal experiences with a collective of videomakers, Candida TV and moves through other relevant Italian experiences

Candida TV

Based in Rome Candida TV was born in 1999 from a melding of different activities underground cinema video production, rave parties street theater independent radio subversive uses of computers and counterculture pop-magazines The core of Candida consists of seven people who fuse the technical knowledge of video production with the social experience of self-managed squatted community centers

In December 1999 we first went on air with our Candida Show on a local TV channel Our slogan was "Make your own TV" and our graphic was "Candida " a girl with a gun/camera in her hands

We called ourselves Candida, the household TV" and our ritornelli was "Television is a weapon, a biopolitical weapon We don t want to be passive anymore and we react by taking the weapon into our own hands

In the 70s Pasolini very precisely described how television had changed the soul and the body of the Italians how it was the main instrument of an anthropological transformation that first and especially affected youth The impact of television is due to example rather than discipline, to imitation rather than coercion These incorporeal transformations that come into our heads again and again like ritornelli [recurring themes] are circulating all over the world at the moment penetrating into every household, and represent the real weapon for the conquest, the occupation, the seizure of brains and bodies[1]

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1 [Struggle Event Media" Maurizio Lazzarato, http //info interactivist net/article pl?sid=04/03/08/1253213&mode=nested&tid=22]

Pasolini had foreseen the future. We are now living with the result of 20 years of brain seizures thanks to Mediaset, the company owned by Silvio Berlusconi, the recent Prime Minister of Italy.

The pivotal format of this corrosive TV was first piloted in 1983 with *Drive In*, a show filled with tits, butts, short gags, and ads. Candida TV members are 80s television babies. We grew up with a television stuffed in our mouths, feeding for years on controlled fluxes of consciousness. The choice of taking the camera and the tools of production into our hands was a compulsive one, the natural consequence of living in a televised world. As people have had to learn to read and write to be part of society, we now must know and decode audiovisual language in order to participate in the global collective performance called "reality."

At risk of their own lives, activists in totalitarian countries organize video laboratories to teach people how to use a videocamera as a household tool—so that the day they gain freedom from their dictatorship they will be ready to face yet another one, the dictatorship of the image in a globalized empire.

> *"I think it is important for [people] to make their own film about their own problems. If you get used to using the camera, you know like a pen, then you know it is a practice, you know, an everyday practice, you make your own diary, than you start to get used to the camera like your own thing and then when something happens, you can go out and then shoot it."*[2]

> *"Contemporary capitalism does not arrive first with the factories, these follow later if at all. It first arrives with words, signs and images. And specifically these technologies precede not only the factories today, but also the war machine."*[3]

Imagine a network of words, signs and moving images that belong to the people and is not concentrated in the hands of one big power.

In November 1999, at the end of the Millennium, Candida Show aired for its very first time. At a very local level, a small crew of demented videomakers proudly broadcast images from the ongoing battle of Seattle. Through technological expression machines (internet, telephone, television), clear evidence that "Another world is possible" was delivered to everyone watching and thus affirmed by multiples perspectives. *As television for the masses, video production plays the role of a mirror in which the global movements can reflect their own imaginary.* [Matteo Pasquinelli, 2002]

The Emergence of Indymedia in Italy

Independent media is obviously not new. Tools to create and disseminate words, signs, and moving images have long been available to the public: by the year 2000, 15 million camcorders had been sold in the USA and 23 million in Europe. According to the Consumer Electronics Association's 2005 annual ownership study, digital cameras were among the top five hottest markets. CEA's study found that 57 percent of U.S. households own digital cameras, up from the 49 percent in 2004.

Indymedia wasn't a product simply imported to Italy, it was born from earlier cyber and tactical experiences of the 90's, such as ECN/isole nella rete, Tactical media Crew, the various hacklabs, and the BBS. By the end of the millennium, these experiences became the local basis for the global anti-capitalist movement, and the Indymedia project spread.

Yet even so, at the end of the 90's, Italian activists still had a cultural resistance against the use of these "tools of power." Bringing cameras to demonstrations was problematic, demonstrators saw videographers as a danger, as someone holding the tools of surveillance. But with the emergence of Indymedia in Italy, this perception has been overturned: now it's the cop who is under surveillance, watched by hundreds of independent media makers who ensure that their violence won't remain invisible to the public.

One Lesson of Genoa G8: Decentralize

At the Genoa G8 protests in 2001, an army of mediactivists was in full force. Hundreds of hours of video were taped and collected, with many journalists, directors, and independent producers giving up their authorship rights for a common good: the creation of collective memory.

On 20 February 2002, the social centre TPO (Teatro Polivalente Occupato) in Bologna was raided by police who seized many of these tapes. Footage filmed by indymedia activists became a danger in the hands of the authorities as it was used as evidence in trials against demonstrators. The Public

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[2] [interview with an independent educator, Burma]

[3] [Struggle, Event, Media, Maurizio Lazzarato, 2004 http://info.interactivist.net/article.pl?sid=04/03/08/1253213&mode=nested&tid=22]

Prosecution edited the video and presented it against people on trial for the G8 protests In turn, the Public Defense argued that the editing falsified the evidence and in Sept 2004 the jury stated that " We agree with the defense who claims that a sequence of images of a violent act doesn't explain the act itself if the images immediately preceding and following it are missing "[4] They understood that an mage *per se* is not good or bad, but depends on the way in which it s used and the context in which t s edited

The lesson learned by the Indymedia network was that it's dangerous to collect so much unedited ootage footage always has to be edited to ensure people's privacy Also, it is dangerous "to keep and maintain so much material in only one place and not decentralize the archive "[5] An easily found, centralized archive makes one more vulnerable to control and repression, thus archives and common goods must be decentralized for protection [6]

A similar lesson was learned by the autistici/inventati collective (A/I), another mediactivist community strongly connected with Indymedia Italy Since 2001, A/I has provided services such as mailing lists, webspace anonymous remailers and newsgroups for non-commercial purposes On 15 June 2004, A/I discovered that their cryptographic services had been compromised A week later, A/I administrators learned that the Postal Police had tapped every user's private communications for a whole year

At that point A/I developed a counter-strategy PLAN*R, to distribute both services and servers among several providers scattered around the world. The A/I collective stated "If a server is compromised, all users will be moved to another server without having to reconfigure anything If all public servers are violated at the same time, this will mean that the situation is much more worrying In that case the impossibility to send e-mails will only be a tiny inconvenience in a much more complex scenery In that case, you can contact us at our Alpha Centauri address, where we hope that by that time the much talked about better world will be ready "[7]

The same principle of decentralization can be found in NewGlobalVision an online video archiving and distribution project where anyone can upload and share videos In the wake of the Genoa G8 the main concern wasn't only to protect video materials from censorship and control, but also to show videos to as many people as possible and thus counter the official media s censoring and mystification of the facts NewGlobalVision was born from this situation "*Bella Ciao*" a film on the Genoa G8 by Carlo Freccero a director of one Italy's three national TV channels, was censored and never broadcast on public TV "*Bella Ciao*" was however uploaded to NewGlobalVision, where it circulates freely Decentralization of content was necessary to diminish the workload of their server's bandwidth

Convergence of Technologies

When NewGlobalVision started in 2001 there were not similar projects (apart from archive.org) Now, five years later there has been a massive explosion of video online it's become a business, with big companies such as *Google Video* and *Youtube* providing a mirage of "the next media " Commercial services such as Google Video or YouTube offer free hosting of video that is automatically transcoded to the Flash Video format You can then link to your video on any of these websites from your own However it will often be more desirable to upload your campaign or advocacy video to a project such as OneWorld or video indymedia org that is hosting similar content and is not directed by commercial interests [8]

Along with online video, a host of other initiatives have sprung up across the globe that seek to mix media activism with recent technological developments, such increasing broadband access, new video encoding advances, content management systems, RSS, and p2p streaming These technologies are converging and could potentially democratise access to video distribution on a global level thus challenging top-down broadcast media and giving voice to a wide range of critical social and environmental issues

P2p streaming, for instance, is the latest generation of peer-to-peer technology that delivers live audio and video streaming to huge pools of internet users Its primary advantage over traditional distribution models is that it drastically decreases costs by sharing data delivery workload across client systems as well as the distributor s own server infrastructure The entertainment industry fears p2p software, because one person paying for only one decoder can share access to encrypted programs all over the net P2p could be a new frontier in the "make your on TV" approach Currently, the scene is dominated by Chinese p2p streaming companies Though one can use p2p to setup a TV or radio station, the main discussion in the Italian language forum is how to setup Chinese language software to bypass pay-per-view TV and watch football matches For those living abroad, p2p streaming software allows one to watch the evening news from one's home country

So far, then the result of these technological convergences is that people are indeed challenging the dominance of top-down broadcast media using new technologies, but less to give voice to different

[4] [*Appare condivisibile quanto sostiene la difesa circa l insufficienza di una ripresa filmata concernente un fatto di violenza a spiegare lo stesso in maniera completa se manca la ripresa degli antefatti e dei postfatti*] (Ordinanza del tribunale di Genova)

[5] (Media Activism 2002)

[6] [http://italy indymedia org/news/2004/08/566833 php]

[7] (A/I collective 2005 http://www aut stici org/en/index php)

[8] [http://audiovideo ngoinabox org/?q=node/34]

critical issues than to reconfirm preexisting identities through collective rituals such as watching football or the news

Attention Saturation

In 2002 the small, independent Italian pirate TV station Telestreets demonstrated how collective identities and fluxes of attention can be hijacked

' A coalition of Guerrilla Marketing and TeleStreets in Rome combined to take the encrypted, privatised SKY signal of the Roma-Juventus match and rebroadcast it to the suburb of San Lorenzo for free from an apartment rooftop immediately making the links between the capitalists' agenda of privatisation and profit and the conflicting desire that football, and much more be a common good for everyone In the ad breaks the protagonists ran their own anti-ads pieces from various TeleStreets and information on Murdoch's nefarious background, as well as adding their own commentary during the game If you want to make a political point in Italy, football is a very good way to make sure your message hits a huge chunk of the population "[9]

The Telestreets network is based on small pirate TV stations in local communities A Telestreet" is a place for people to meet and share practices and ideas and express their voices In this action, Telestreets hijacked the attention of people gathered around their identity as football supporters The sense of identity and belonging to this community is always strong, but the Telestreet network was able to successfully target it Collaboration with NewGlobalVision gave the Telestreet network a wider video distribution and drove this analog entity into the digital commons Technological convergence thus helped Telestreets reach a very different and otherwise unreachable audience

After two years of growth, however, Telestreet is now shrinking and fragmenting under the weight of its internal contradictions. "Telestreets currently function more as deeds than actual means They serve more to bring conflict to a mind-numbing mediascape than to disseminate information across masses of people Given their limited broadcast coverage and often flexible' transmission hours they are still at an infant stage, lacking money and competing with a television audience very much entrenched in, but not necessarily happy with, what they are getting Competing for attention is still a major obstacle making guerrilla tactics all the more necessary "[10]

According to Bifo, founder of OrfeoTv the first Telestreet the network avoided direct political confrontation with the "combination of political-economic-mediatic power that in 2001 took over the nation and started a process of demolishing democracy "[11] Bifo thinks that Telestreets have to claim their right to be legal In July 2006, with the change of government in Italy a chance for Telestreet to obtain legal frequencies is becoming real At this point, it will be very important for the network not to just conquer a space in the mediascape, but to subvert the mediascape itself in synergy with internet technologies

Beyond TV

Video makers, programmers and web producers developing online video distribution as a tool for social justice and media democracy met for the first time in Rome in June 2006 Zoe Young reports on the gathering "A lot of material has been produced and the real outcomes of the meeting have yet to be discerned, it was more the beginning of a process than a one off event with immediate products Anyway, one of the most important things was to recognize the importance for related projects to collaborate and evolve away from 'reinventing wheels' by all doing the same online publishing' task and instead evolve towards putting existing 'wheels' together to build a functional set of vehicles to move forward more effectively as a community This involves common projects like sharing software jointly developing documentation and help files in wikibooks' including shared development of work processes for translation and subtitling, and developing missing technical tools "[12]

One can imagine these video projects as a swarm of birds floating toward a shape and a direction but not yet finding it, a swarm searching for its collective instinct, driven by different pushes in the attempt to give shape to a new mediascape

We have tools and we have networks, we understand that these networks should be decentralized, and we are building them this way For 20 years, Berlusconi s style of media language rooted its way into our brains, it overwhelmed our reality, giving us no other chance but to watch it In a very different less intrusive way a similar thing is happening with online videos they belong to everyone and are made by everyone The establishment of a new network of words, sign and moving images will be slow and silent, but it's emerging right now in a horizontal and non-hierarchical environment "The next medium, whatever it is—it may be the extension of consciousness—will include television as its content, not as its environment and will transform television into an art form "[13]

9 Make Media Make Trouble Hacking the Infocalypse Andrew Lowenthal]

10 | Make Media Make Trouble Hacking the Infocalypse Andrew Lowenthal http://info interactivist net/article pl?sid=04/04/01/178251&mode=nested&tid=15]

11 [Bifo 2006 http://www.telestreet it/modules php?op=modload&name=News&file=article&sid=291&mode=thread&order=0&thold=0]

12 [Zoe Young a report from Transmission Forte Prenestino Roma, June 2006]

13 [Marshall McLuhan 1967]

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Pasquinelli, *Media Activism*, DeriveApprodi, 2002

- Lazzarato *Struggle Event, Media* info interactivist net/article pl?sid=04/03/08/ 13&mode=nested&tid=22

Lowenthal *Make Media Make Trouble the Infocalypse* info interactivist net/article pl?sid=04/04/01/ 1&mode=nested&tid=15

Vattimo *La società trasparente* Feltrinelli 1980

Nettography

Vademecum of the mediactivist. http://italy indymedia org/news/2004/06/566833 php

Free and Open Source software (F/OSS) tailored to the needs of NGOs http://ngoinabox org/

Wikibooks pages on internet video http://en wikibooks org/wiki/Video#Internet_Video

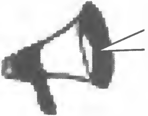
NewGlobalVision www ngvision.org

Telestreet www telestreet.it

A/I www autistici org

Candida TV www candidatv tv

Transmission www transmission cc



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128-139

Disciplining the Avant-Garde: The United States versus The Critical Art Ensemble*

Gregory Sholette

Federal investigators from the Joint Terrorism Task Force enter the home of Professor Steve [illegible] in Haz Mat suits May [illegible] 200[illegible]

It's vitally important whenever we think about insurgency to remember that the essence of any insurgency and its most decisive battle space is the psychological. In the 1960s, insurgency was referred to as armed theater, which I think is a really poignant way of thinking about it.
Steven Metz, U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute.

There's somethin' happenin' here. What it is ain't exactly clear.
Buffalo Springfield

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* A version of this essay first appeared in the Summer 2005 issue of the journal *CIRCA: Contemporary Visual Culture in Ireland* (pp. 50-59). The author wishes to extend his appreciation to Lucia Sommer for her assistance researching this article.

Birth of the Homeland Security State Apparatus

It has been over five years since President George W. Bush proclaimed, "you're either with us or against us."[1] Since that time the neoliberal "revolution" has undergone a partial "Balkinization" in the United States. Gone certainly is the ideology of fluidity and openness that presided over the post-Cold War years. In its place a new protectionist spirit has emerged in which once seemingly expedient security measures have been established as the new way of living in an age of asymmetrical and unremitting warfare.[2] From no-fly lists to ubiquitous public surveillance, from severe visa and immigration restrictions to the fingerprinting of tourists, the new "bunker America" is replacing the fantasy of borderless globalization. Even unilateral military action is justified as a preemptive defense of the homeland. Meanwhile, the rest of the world is offered *Pax Americana*, a sanctimonious sop revealing perhaps what was at stake all along: nothing less than global supremacy. Less well known at home, however, thanks to guilt-free "happy" news and embedded reporting, is the targeted suspension of habeas corpus and mass cataloging of thousands of Islamic, Middle Eastern, or North African people inside the country. Thousands of individuals have been detained without trial, others deported, and some have been sent abroad into "extra-juridical" zones within Pakistan and Syria where human rights do not stand in the way of extreme interrogation methods.[3]

It comes as no surprise therefore that those who publicly question aspects of the new "homeland-security state apparatus" also find themselves victims of government investigation and intimidation. While certainly not on par with disappearances and torture, scores of artists, journalists and academics, including several high school students, have been questioned recently about alleged anti-American activities by a variety of Federal and local law-enforcement officials. In at least one case, the one that concerns this essay, the U.S. government is aggressively seeking to portray a group of contemporary artists known for their politically provocative, yet legal and Constitutionally protected art, as a full-blown terrorist threat to the national security.

Since 11 September 2001, the FBI and the Secret Service have interrogated gallery curators in Chicago and Dallas for displaying images they deemed suspicious, accused a Nevada man of "borderline terrorism" because he had a bumper sticker that read "KING GEORGE – Off With His Head", and detained and questioned a Colorado highschool principal for permitting students to sing the Bob Dylan tune *Masters of War* during a public performance. In addition the culture-jamming group AdBusters was questioned by government agents over a flag-like billboard they installed in Times Square, and Secret Service agents even prevented two teachers from attending a Bush rally because they wore t-shirts printed with the words "Protect our civil liberties." The atmosphere of enhanced public security has apparently also emboldened some local law enforcement to disregard this very advice. Police in Albany arrested a man for wearing a peace sign on his T-Shirt; a young man was arrested outside an Armed Forces Career Center in Boston for dressing up as a U.S. torture victim in Iraq; six men were arrested in Pennsylvania for creating an Abu Ghraib-style human pyramid as the President's motorcade drove past, and in August 2004 during the Republican National Convention the New York Police Department went so far as to take thousands of people into custody, holding them long past the legal twenty-four-hour limit in appalling conditions at a concrete and steel pier on the Hudson River.

Probing calls from Federal agents to university administrators have added to a chilling climate of suspicion within an academia already apprehensive over Congressional debates about alleged anti-American curricula and over student groups like the ultra-conservative Campus Watch, who openly stake out "liberal" instructors in order to document their so-called Left bias. Professors at universities in New Mexico, Houston, Urbana-Champaign, South Florida, upstate New York and even Columbia University in New York City have discovered that raising questions inside the classroom about U.S. policy, Israel, 9/11 and homeland security can bring on disciplinary action and even dismissal. Regrettably, museum directors at Arizona State University, the City Museum of Washington, and Ohio University have gone so far as to actively self-censor their own exhibitions by removing socially critical work or by adding art that reflects a "conservative" point of view. Meanwhile, the firing of several prize-winning journalists effectively demonstrates that challenging Bush administration policy even from within mainstream media can have considerable consequences.[4]

But the most alarming case is certainly the U.S. Attorney General William Hochel's unrelenting investigation of artist Steven Kurtz and his former colleague, Professor Robert Ferrell. Kurtz is a professor of art at the University of Buffalo in New York. He is also a co-founder of the Critical Art Ensemble (CAE), an artists' collective that dates from 1986 which has become known for its multi-media projects splicing Brechtian pedagogy onto the comedic diligence of a Mr. Wizard.[5] Donning white lab coats and assuming the personae of amateur scientists, they arm themselves with highschool lab equipment as well as common household supplies and groceries in order to demystify, or more to the point, democratize the increasingly privatized worlds of science, technology and information networks. These often-playful routines contrast with the serious

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1 George W. Bush in a joint news conference with French President Jacques Chirac, 6 November 2001.

2 Some who read this sentence will naturally question my use of the term "openness" and point to the harsh political attacks on artists such as Karen Finley, Robert Mapplethorpe and Andres Serrano among others in the 1990s over their allegedly subversive images and performances. But the so-called "culture wars" was really Neoconservative ideology in vitro, whereas for NeoLiberals it was primarily about transforming the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) as into an institution actively promoting the privatization (commercialization) of culture.

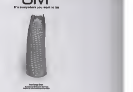
3 Since this paper was written the CIA rendition program has become well known, and yet the number of people involved in it and in other forms of detention is difficult to estimate. An excellent website that includes a database of some who have disappeared is <www.disappearedinamerica>, and I also refer the reader to Trevor Paglen's project "Torture Taxi" at <www.paglen.com> for more on the rendition program.

4 Data is on many of these cases and over a hundred others are compiled by Matthew Rothschild in his McCarthyism Watch Updates published by *Progressive Magazine* and available online at <www.progressive.org>. See also Temporary Services special website on the Resurgence of the Culture Wars at <www.temporaryservices.org/culture_wars.html>.

5 *Mr. Wizard* was a popular U.S. television show in the 1950s and 1960s in which an actor, Donald Herbert, demonstrated laboratory experiments for young people.

intent and analytical approach of the group's numerous books and manifestos In *Electronic Civil Disturbance* CAE celebrates anti-corporate, "slacker' Ludditism, while in *Digital Resistance*, they provide plans for making graffiti-writing robots and reprogramming Nintendo games so that children will gain "the means to bring about a situation in which a process of broad spectrum invention, discovery, and criticality can occur[6]" Whether in a museum, an international conference, on the street or in print, CAE's work unvaryingly aims to inform, entertain and demonstrate the value of public knowledge

…complete Installation by Critical Art Ensemble in *The Interventionists* exhibition at MASS MoCA, → June 2004 note that most of the work was already in the custody of the FBI


GM
It's everywhere you want to be

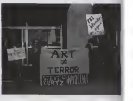
… the past several years the group has focused attention on what they see as the misuse of …chnology by private corporations operating outside the realm of democratic, public debate CAE's tactical response is what they term, "Fuzzy Biological Sabotage" or FBS, a type of sophisticated, prank that uses harmless biological agents including plants, insects, reptiles and even microorganisms to operate in the gray, in-between spaces as yet unregulated by institutional regimes [7] In 2002, the group demonstrated one form of FBS in the project *Contestational Biology*, which was developed in conjunction with artists Beatriz de Costa and Claire Pentecost and installed at the Corcoran Art Gallery in Washington DC *Contestational Biology* consisted of an "amateur" scientific experiment that "reverse engineered" samples of the Monsanto Corporation's Round-Up Ready corn, canola and soy products, three of the many genetically modified organisms rapidly being integrated into modern agriculture industry The ultimate goal of the installation, however, … to raise public awareness about the sweeping privatization of the human food supply by directly …testing Monsanto's right to create and patent customized life forms for corporate profit

All of CAE's writings and projects converge around a single objective a sustained effort to de-familiarize forms of civil disobedience in order to re-invent new ways of responding critically to …temporary, social and political reality They therefore insist "Outdated methods of resistance …t be refined, and new methods of disruption invented that attack power (non)centers on the electronic level "[8]

…ly influenced by the theories of Michael Foucault and Giles Deleuze, CAE perceives political …ss operating more or less anonymously within, or across, a deterritorialized, postindustrial environment In light of this, most past forms of activist confrontation are largely useless Out of necessity therefore, political resistance must adapt by appropriating the same evanescent digital networks as corporate and state power, while endlessly recalibrating their critical interventions in the form of "tactical media" According to David Garcia and Geert Lovink, "tactical media" occurs whenever cheap, "'do it yourself' media, made possible by the revolution in consumer electronics and expanded forms of distribution (from public access cable to the internet), are exploited by groups and individuals who feel aggrieved by, or excluded from, the wider culture "[9]

CAE's signature approach to tactical media is a decidedly self-reflexive one, in so far as the group frequently applies do-it-yourself (DIY) maneuvers to science and technology in order to reveal the …ng, ideological administration of knowledge itself At the same time the group links tactical … to a distinctly anti-modern form of "cellular' collectivism and political autonomy [10] For now, …t to underscore the significance of this avowed amateurism to CAE, while suggesting it may also be playing a central role in the group's recent predicament with Federal authorities

… has stated that, "Amateurs have the ability to see through dominant paradigms, are freer to …e elements of paradigms thought long dead, and can apply everyday life experience to … deliberations Most important, however, amateurs are not invested in institutional systems …nowledge production and policy construction, and hence do not have irresistible forces guiding the outcome of their process "[11] For a thirty-three-billion-dollar homeland state-security apparatus dedicated to patrolling the periphery and reinstating war-time discipline, such calls made by self-acknowledged dissidents for the founding of new, amateur forms of "fuzzy" resistance may seem … curious Or they may appear outright devious As military theorist Steven Metz argues, the essence of insurgency is not seizing territory, but rather sending messages to a wider audience … a type of politicized theater [12]



…in Texas demonstrating in support of Kurtz, 2005 →

…s Not Terrorism

…e morning of 21 May, 2004, Steven Kurtz awoke to find his wife Hope lying unresponsive …side him Kurtz immediately called paramedics On arrival, the medical response team took notice … assorted laboratory equipment in the home including Petri dishes, microscopes and test tubes …ously, local police alerted the FBI The Joint Terrorism Task Force soon descended on the Kurtz home and, in a scene reminiscent of the 1971 techno-thriller *The Andromeda Strain*, agents wearing white Haz-Mat (Hazardous Materials) suits cordoned off the house, confiscated the body of Kurtz's wife, and gathered a variety of materials for scientific analysis. They also impounded the artist's passport, lesson plans, books, automobile, computers, and his cat.

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[6] Critical Art Ensemble *Digital Resistance Explorations in Tactical Media* Autonomedia Books 2001 p 139

[7] See <http://www critical-art net/biotech/conbio/index. html> and *The Molecular Invasion* published by Autonomedia Books in 2002

[8] Critical Art Ensemble *The Electronic Disturbance*, p. [NEED FULL REFERENCE]

[9] David Garcia and Geert Lovink *The ABC's of Tactical Media*, 1997 available at <subsol c3 hu/subsol_2/ contributors2/garcia-lovinktext html>

[10] Blake Stimson and I elaborate on this concept of post-war collective forms our essay "Periodizing Collectivism " *Third Text*, Vol 18, No 6 pp 573 – 586, and again in our forthcoming anthology *Collectivism after Modernism* for the University of Minnesota

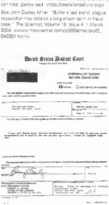
[11] Critical Art Ensemble *Digital Resistance Explorations in Tactical Media* Autonomedia Books, 2001 p 9

[12] See note 1

By the next day, the New York's Commissioner of Public Health officially reported that nothing hazarbous was discovered in the home and no danger to the public existed. Hope had died of a heart attack. Nonetheless, the house was under quarantine for six days during which time Kurtz was placed under surveillance for twenty-two hours. FBI agents did not arrest him, but put him up in a hotel together with collaborator and family friend Claire Pentecost, who recently arrived from Chicago. The agency even purchased Kurtz dinner with the hopes of uncovering more information. At one point Pentecost was taken aside and asked if Kurtz had ever advocated the overthrow of the United States government.[13]

At the time of his wife's tragic death, Kurtz and CAE were finishing work on a project entitled *Free Range Grains*, which utilized a do-it-yourself DNA-extraction laboratory for testing for the presence of genetically altered genes, or trans-genes, in store-bought groceries. The project was to have been installed in an upcoming exhibition entitled *The Interventionists: Art in the Social Sphere* at the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art.[14] It was the presence of these laboratory materials together with three types of harmless bacteria procured for the group's next project about the history of U.S. bio-warfare programs, which led to the investigation, because prior to the unexpected death of his wife, there is no evidence Kurtz or CAE were of interest to the FBI.[15]

Eventually, Hope's body was returned for burial, but the FBI retained the artist's passport, books, and computer. Still, up to this point, the incident appeared to be a case of jittery officials who, in the aftermath of the still unsolved anthrax mail murders of 2001, reacted to the discovery of a premature death and the presence of unexpected lab equipment with an indiscriminate response. That was the assumption at least until several CAE members and collaborators were handed subpoenas by Federal agents at the Mass MoCA opening directing them to appear before a Federal Grand Jury in June of 2004. Nine people were served subpoenas by June, and while neither the FBI nor the Attorney General would make public the details of their probe, the subpoenas' wording indicated that Kurtz was being investigated under U.S. Code Title 18, Part I, Chapter10, Sec. 175: Prohibitions with respect to Biological Weapons. The scope of this statute was greatly expanded by the USA Patriot Act of 2001, so much so that some speculate that even the harmless research bacteria Kurtz obtained for CAE art projects might now be labeled as a hazardous "biological agent." Commenting on the potential charges Donald A. Henderson, Dean emeritus of the Johns Hopkins University School of Hygiene and Public Health, pointed out that, "based on what I have read and understand, Professor Kurtz has been working with totally innocuous organisms.... [N]one of the organisms noted to be present in this case are covered, nor should they be, by the post-9/11 provisions."[16]



United States District Court

WESTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

[redacted]

SUBPOENA TO TESTIFY BEFORE GRAND JURY

☒ PERSON ☐ DOCUMENT(S) OR OBJECT(S)

↙ Subpoena delivered to CAE collaborator at the opening of the *Interventionists* exhibition

To the surprise of no one who knew Kurtz or the work of CAE, after it met on 15 June the Grand Jury rejected all charges of bioterrorism. Once again, the unpleasant incident appeared about to conclude, with Kurtz anticipating a public apology like that extended to Brandon Mayfield, the Islamic convert from Oregon who was escorted in handcuffs from his place of work and accused of involvement in the Madrid train bombings.[17] Optimism was short-lived, however. On 22 June, CAE's publisher Autonomedia, was subpoenaed, indicating the investigation was not yet over.[18] Before long, Kurtz and Ferrell found themselves facing up to twenty years in prison on less shocking charges of mail fraud for the alleged mishandling of bacterial samples purchased from a scientific supply house that none the less carry a possible jail sentence of twenty years.[19] As of this writing, the investigation grinds on. The trial is now all but certain as the defense lost challenges for dismissal. But the actual trial will not likely begin until late 2007 or 2008. Meanwhile, untold hundreds of thousands of public dollars are being spent by the US Attorney General over the allegedly deceptive purchase of a couple of hundred dollars in merchandise. Significantly, the company involved in the supposed fraud has not even bothered to claim damages.

The public sullying of a white and otherwise privileged academic's reputation is not unique these days. Doctor Thomas Butler, a world-renowned specialist who researches bubonic plague, has also received similar treatment by Federal officials. In January of 2003, Butler noticed thirty vials of the bacteria missing from his lab. Assuming the samples were misplaced, but erring on the side of caution he reported their absence to the FBI. As someone with a history of security clearance, he trusted the government and signed away his rights to legal defense. He was then arrested.
"I was tricked and deceived," said Butler on CBS's *60 Minutes*. "I was naive to have trusted them and the assurances they gave me." Butler was charged with sixty-nine criminal counts, including everything from bioterror to tax evasion, and even though the well-respected, senior scientist was, like Kurtz, acquitted of all terror-related charges, he was instead indicted for financial misconduct. Butler has lost his job, his doctor's license, and now is financially broke and facing several years in prison.[20]

13 Related by Claire Pentecost in a presentation at The Cooper Union on October 25th, 2004.

14 *The Interventionists: Art in the Social Sphere*. Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, 30 May to 20 March 2005.

15 No evidence of prior interest, that is to say with this one possibly coincidental caveat: a lecturer at the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana who baselessly stated, "the Critical Art Ensemble paints a picture of cyber-resistance that looks a lot like the descriptions of bin Laden's alleged network." Whether Heidi Brush's paper "Electronic jihad," was noticed by Federal agents is anybody's guess. It was, however, reported on by Kevin Featherly in *Newsbytes*, 16 October 2001, and it was circulated on the internet, among other places at <lists.virus.org/isn-0110/msg00110.html>.

16 Quoted in "Anti-biotech artist indicted for possessing harmless bacteria" by Brendan Coyne, *The New Standard*, 6 July 2004, available at <newstandardnews.net/content/?action=show_item&itemid=646>. Furthermore, the bacteria purchased by Kurtz and Ferrell is often used in high school and middle school classrooms.

17 An illegible fingerprint faxed to the U.S. from Spain was later blamed for Mayfield's much publicized humiliation and the FBI sheepishly admitted their blunder.

18 The Attorney General apparently dropped this aspect of the investigation after being pressured by the American Civil Liberties Union.

19 Almost four years after the tragic death of his wife, SUNY Buffalo Professor Steven Kurtz has still not stood trial in a case that technically involves nothing more than a contract dispute over $256 of harmless bacteria. Curiously, neither the company who supplied the bacteria, American Cultures, nor the University of Pittsburgh through which the transaction occurred, have brought forth any charges of their own. In February of 2008 Professor Robert Ferrell, the co-defendant in this case, accepted a reduced sentence in exchange for a guilty plea. Suffering from life-threatening health problems Ferrell was charged a minimum fine of five hundred dollars and then released from the courtroom without probationary supervision. As of March, 2008 Professor Kurtz and his defense attorney Paul Cambria wait for a judgement on a final motion that would drop all charges against the artist. Failing a dismissal the trial will almost certainly take place before the end of the year. For more information about the case and how you can help, please visit: <http://caedefensefund.org>

20 See John Dudley Miller, "Butler's last stand: plague researcher may receive a long prison term in fraud case," *The Scientist*, Volume 18, Issue 4, 1 March 2004. <www.thescientist.com/yr2004/mar/prof2_040301.html>

The National Academy of Sciences and the Institute of Medicine sent a letter to the United States Attorney General warning against "the impact that Butler's case may have on other scientists who may be discouraged from embarking upon or continuing crucial bioterrorism-related scientific research."[21]

Doctor Thomas Butler with his daughter prior to being incarcerated →

Meanwhile, state intervention aimed at regulating scientific research has been increasingly visible of late. Most people now know that government scientists who challenge the White House's refusal to admit the industrial basis of climate change have been censored. But the Bush administration has also demanded the right to approve all U.S. scientists selected for the World Health Organization. In 2004, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services blocked scientists from traveling to the International AIDS Conference in Bangkok. And in March of 2005 the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH) received a letter charging it with creating "a crisis for microbiological research." The letter was signed by more than half of the scientists whom the NIH helps employ.[22] The charge of promoting "junk science" and manipulating data is increasingly being leveled at the White House, including by twenty Nobel Laureates.[23] David Schubert, head of the Cellular Neurobiology Laboratory at the Salk Institute for Biological Studies in La Jolla, went so far as to say that there has been "an unprecedented assault by the executive branch of our government upon the ability of U.S. scientists to freely share their data and insights about our world with the public. Much of the justification for this repression of scientific communication falls under the Orwellian concept of 'sound science,' which is clearly understood by the scientific community to mean the misrepresentation of scientific data to reflect the administration's political and social agendas."[24] Meanwhile, as these prohibitions on information sharing dampen certain types of scientific research, U.S. government spending on biological-weapons research has reached unprecedented levels.[25]

Unlike many people who have been investigated or outright "disappeared" since 9/11, the members of CAE are reasonably well-known figures within the international art world. Moral and material support has arrived from dozens of countries, and an auction of artwork by artists such as Hans Haacke, Andrea Fraser, Martha Rosler, Carl Andre, and Joseph Kosuth was staged at a major Chelsea art gallery in New York. Yet, while the Kurtz/CAE case has received a relatively high degree of attention in the mainstream press and the art world, criticism of the Federal government's handling of this case has not been nearly as intense or widespread as the outcry during the so-called "culture wars" of the 1990s.[26] Gradually, however, these disturbing stories are beginning to align and, in the process, provoke an inevitable question: is the United States re-entering a period of political and cultural repression like that experienced during the Palmer Raids of the 1910s or the McCarthy era of the 1950s? Without denying the possibility of a return to such overt political tyranny, I think it necessary to make this all-too-convenient hypothesis more problematic.[27]

For one thing, the abuse of civic and human rights has been an enduring feature of U.S. military and law enforcement throughout its history, from Wounded Knee and the conquest of California, to the annexation of the Philippines and on up to the present. What has not happened to white middle-class Americans since the early 1950s is the systematic retraction of constitutionally guaranteed civil liberties. At that time, the FBI investigated and infiltrated US-based supporters of political refugees from El Salvador. For another thing, the very threat of such a return to the bad old days is useful in itself as a type of disinformation. Panic drove many in the 1950s to abandon hope of a constitutionally-based legal defense. Self-censorship and political resignation soon followed. Even the Communist Party USA, the primary target of the government's assault, concluded it was better to go underground than publicly face what was wrongly theorized to be the rise of full-blown American Fascism.[28] An ideological battlefield was quickly transformed into a game of shooting fish in a barrel.

Therefore, perhaps a better way to phrase our hypothesis is to ask why it is that the post-9/11 ideological landscape and the CAE investigation appear at once so familiar and simultaneously so very strange?

Counter-globalization demonstrators circa 2003 ↘

Managing Dissent

State intervention into the production and distribution of culture is as enduring as the history of nations is long. Think of Plato's injunction against poets and painters in his ideal Republic or Stalin's decree enforcing Socialist Realism in mid-1930s, as well as, of course, the House Un-American Activities Committee's witch-hunting of Hollywood radicals in the 1950s. Modern bourgeois societies have evolved two seemingly contradictory modes of state control. One is the isolation and overt suppression of select individuals, groups or ideological positions allegedly carried out in defense of the freedom or morality of an alleged majority interest [29] This type of explicit control reappears cyclically in the United States especially whenever government or big business is threatened by collective dissent emerging "from below " Its most recent full-scale manifestation took place immediately after World War II, when militant labor unions, communists, and other Left radicals, grown strong during the anti-fascist Popular Front years, were systematically eradicated through a combination of legal and extra-constitutional measures Before it was over thousands of men and women were investigated lost their jobs and / or were blacklisted in the name of freedom and democracy [30] Many of these people worked in the culture industries and academia While such overt repression is extremely effective in the short-run, the same establishment that unleashed it will eventually denounce tyranny as antithetical to the free society it claims to protect So even as the hammer of law enforcement was descending on individual radicals and nonconformists a subtler means for managing dissent was coming to fruition After all the Cold War was aside from some hot moments in Greece, Korea and Cuba, primarily a battle over which system could deliver a superior way of life to its citizens Government leaders may have sought to overcome the missile gap, but just as significant were gaps in refrigerator, stove and automobile production Not surprisingly there was also a culture gap As Eva Cockroft Serge Gilbaut and others have demonstrated, the U S State Department actively supported the display and export of American art abroad This included avant-garde painting and sculpture, which became a global advertisement for capitalism's apparently infinite tolerance of artistic expression and individual freedom [3]

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[21] The letter is available as a downloadable PDF file at <www.fas.org/sgp/news/2003/08/nas081503.pdf>. Thomas Butler was found guilty by a jury not for his improper handling of biological substances, but for various financial improprieties. He was sentenced to two years in prison and has lost all appeals to date.

[22] Rick Weiss, "Scientists object to NIH's bioterror focus," *Washington Post*, 1 March, 2005, p. A13.

[23] James Glanz, "Scientists accuse White House of distorting facts," *New York Times*, 18 February, 2004 <www.nytimes.com/2004/02/18/science/18CND-RESE.html?ex=1078153306&ei=1&en=123c8d5d62ce741>.

[24] David Schubert's commentary was published in the conservative newspaper *San Diego Union-Tribune*, 9 July 2004, p. B7, available at <www.organicconsumers.org/corp/bushscience071604.cfm>.

[25] According to Debora MacKenzie, grants "for work on non-biodefence disease germs fell 27%, while grants for studying model bacteria such as *Escherichia coli* fell by a whopping 41%." "Top U.S. biologists oppose biodefense boom," *The New Scientist*, March 2005 <www.newscientist.com/channel/health/dn7074>.

[26] Martha Rosler pointed out to me that the CAE case is unlike that of Mapplethorpe, Serrano et al. in so far as it has not directly implicated cultural institutions or arts administrators. Is it also possible that "subversive sexual imagery" when decried as amoral by the State rallies those who defend individual liberty, whereas "subversive" activism when decried as terrorism has an opposite, censorial effect?

[27] Australian artist and writer Anne Munster is one of the few to challenge assumptions about neo-McCarthyism. However, she hypothesizes a far more ominous matrix-like "bio-logic" is at work and that CAE was snared by its self-regulating nodal networks thanks to the chance occasion of Hope's heart-attack. Although Munster's novel argument suffers from a lack of historical or economic analysis, she nonetheless offers several insights, including her statement that the charges facing Kurtz and Ferrell arise from their having violated "expectations pertaining to the conduct of intellectual and cultural work." See her essay "Why is bioart *not* terrorism? some critical nodes in the networks of informatic life," published in the e-journal *Culture Machine*, no. 7, 2005 <culturemachine.tees.ac.uk/frm_f1.htm>. For a more grounded and thoroughly researched analysis of the CAE see Claire Pentecost, "Reflections on the Case by the U.S. Justice Department against Steven Kurtz and Robert Ferrell," at <http://www.caedefensefund.org/reflections.html>.

[28] Some 10,000 people may have lost their jobs during the McCarthy Era of the late 1940s and early 1950s.

It comes as no surprise, therefore, that capitalist marketing barely broke stride as the counter-culture blasted onto the Cold War stage during the late 1960s Not the state but corporate America led the way this time by converting from the production of goods to the selling of lifestyles Patched and faded jeans, Che Guevarra accessories and the homely VW Beetle were soon the ultimate symbols of hip or what Tom Frank describes as a counter-cultural capitalist orthodoxy [32] And while resistance to the authority of state power remains tenacious, its changing forms are no less a product of the historical moment than is nationalism, imperialism and so forth Such opposition has run the gamut from bourgeois revolutionaries in the coffee houses of the seventeenth century to the Paris Commune of 1871 to the turn-of-the-century anarcho-syndicalism of the International Workers of the World (IWW) After the Second World War, the New Left turned against centralized Old Left politics as the Civil Rights and other minority-based liberation movements re-centered anti-nationalist sentiment around individual freedoms and/or cultural identity Curiously even the punks overt negation of the 1960s was carried out in the name of anti-state, cultural anarchism just as today informal collective such as Reclaim the Streets, Carnival Against Capital and Indymedia reflect the green-anarchist and indigenous-peoples movements that are militantly opposed to globalization and centralized authority Under the circumstances *stealing the state* has been transformed into *stealing corporate power* in order that it may be redirected towards alternative people-centered purposes As the activist art group Yomango insists, "Dare to desire YOMANGO is your style risky innovative It is the articulate proliferation of creative gestures " [33]

Nevertheless, it is crucial to note that powerful, anti-state sentiments are also shared by right-wing libertarians and assorted religious fundamentalists, as well as by a group of highly influential "centrist" policy makers who, not so long ago prophesized a future in which the global marketplace would gradually subjugate national territories Neoliberalism — from Reagan and Thatcher on up to Bill Clinton — is typically described as a response to the capital crisis of the late 1970s, and in his influential study *The Condition of Postmodernity*, David Harvey argues that the floating exchange rates and financial networks of the 1980s permitted corporations to outmaneuver national interests in what he labels a regime of "flexible" capital accumulation [34] Even if by some accounts neoliberalism was only a method for stabilizing U S national markets over and against all others,[35] a perspective that recent moves towards protectionism may bear out, one thing most analysts agree upon is that, up until 9/11, the last thirty years have seen a reduction of state influence in economic matters the globalization of production, an emerging class of mobile, creative laborers and a rise, especially evident in the immediate post-Cold War era, of a technological entrepreneurialism that prompted one noted commentator to triumphantly proclaim the arrival of " a certain uniformity of economic and political institutions across different regions and cultures " and ultimately to theorize the end of history itself [36]

This flexible accumulation finds its behavioral corollary in what theorist Brian Holmes describes as the "flexible personality " "an internalized and culturalized pattern of soft coercion which nonetheless can be directly correlated to the hard data of labor conditions, bureaucratic and police practices, border regimes and military interventions " [37] According to Holmes the new conditions erase the division between consumption and production, and worker alienation seems to vanish as "individuals aspire to mix their labor with their leisure " Even businesses began to see themselves as a "sphere of creative activity, of self-realization" in which the new, "net" worker becomes "the manager of his or her own self-gratifying activity " [38] That is at least as long as happy-work leads to a product worthy of profitable exchange

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according to *Encyclopedia of the American Left*, (Eds Buhle Buhle and Georgakas Garland Publishing NY and London 1990 p 459)

[29] Remarkably it was to protect the *minority* interest that Constitutional freedoms were initially devised

[30] See note 27

[31] Eva Cockroft "Abstract Expressionism Weapon of the Cold War " *Artforum*, June 1974 pp 39 – 41 and Serge Guilbaut, *How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art* Chicago University Press Chicago 1983

[32] Thomas Frank "Why Johnny Can t Dissent," in *Commodify your Dissent Salvos from the Baffler* eds Thomas Frank and Matt Weiland W W Norton & Company New York and London 1997 p 34

[33] See <Yomango net> as well as the work of The Yes Men (<www theyesmen org>) who are perhaps the finest practitioners of pilfering corporate power today

[34] David Harvey *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change* Cambridge MA Blackwell Publishers 1990

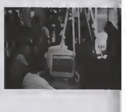
[35] "It was the threat of protectionism that the U S used to attack those [other] countries unwilling to go global thereby transforming the impulse for nationalism itself as a means of opening up markets " in "Finance and American Empire " Leo Panitch and Sam Gindin *The Socialist Register* 2005 pp 24 & 26

[36] Francis Fukuyma "The illusion of exceptionalism *Journal of Democracy* 1997 #3 pp 146 – 149 <academic2 american edu/~dfagel/Markets&democracy fukuyama html>

[37] Brian Holmes "The flexible personality for a new cultural critique " p 139 in *Hieroglyphs of the Future* Arkzin publishers Zagreb Croatia 2001

[38] Ibid p 122

The End of the Flexible Personality?



It is at this moment, in the glow of these softly regulated modes of precarious, creative labor, that seemingly radical styles of business management emerge directly modeling themselves after experimental, avant-garde and even critical forms of culture. Frank's counter-cultural capitalist orthodoxy is one such example, with its rapid-fire absorption of all that is new and different, which is then re-packaged and sold back to us as an ersatz "otherness." Consider now the highly successful CEO Al West, who runs a risk-management firm near Philadelphia in which employees serve on fluid, multi-disciplinary teams and re-arrange portable office furniture to suit the evolving needs of projects. The few walls that exist inside the company's postmodern headquarters display contemporary artwork, some of it strange and disturbing to workers. West explains that his objective is to help people "get out of the box." "We want them to think creatively, so why not highlight these pieces? That's what art is all about – doing it in a different way." West's management theory sounds as if it came from the pages of *Artforum* or even the anarchist zine *Clamor*, rather than from the *Wall Street Journal*. "It used to be that information would flow up to one spot, and then the decision we make would flow back down. That's no longer a good model. In today's environment, you turn the organization upside down."[39]

Unorthodox working stations at SEI Investments, Oaks, Pennsylvania ↗

Critical Art Ensemble performance "Cult of the New Eve," parodies the business → of bio-technology corporations treating it as a "cult." Pittsburgh PA, 2000

Drawing an even tighter circle around contemporary art practices and business theory, Matthew Jesse Jackson writes in a recent piece for the *New Left Review*, suggestively entitled *Managing the Avant-garde*: "Power in the art world is shifting away from the tenured stasis of academe to cultural actors plugged directly into the entrepreneurial sector. And with this transformation, subversive "anti-institutional" institutional changeability has become the defining cultural mandate of the neoliberal world order."[40] Is it too far a stretch to suggest that there exists a structural and historical correlation between such vanguard management ideology, with its flexible, at times experimental approach to worker productivity and happiness, and the forms (not content), of tactical media?[41]

Significantly, this anarcho-capitalist dream of unimpeded financial networks and frictionless exchange has recently hit a roadblock, or should I say "road-bush"? Free-market subterfuge has been replaced by pious demolition and occupation. Compared to past conservative regimes in the U.S. that have favored isolationism over militarism, the Bush Doctrine is something of a chimera.[42] With the appetite of unrepressed, free-market capitalism, its heart is filled with the moral righteousness of missionary Christianity. (Nor can one help but notice that its body is designed for old-fashioned imperialist conquest.) Therefore, when comparisons are made between past and present instances of state-sponsored oppression, contradictions of this magnitude must be factored in. Indeed, the modern state's apparently bifurcated response to political dissent — carefully targeted, yet outright repression, on the one hand, and repressive tolerance manifest by commodity culture, on the other — is not, strictly speaking, an ideological reaction. For despite a superficial equivalence between conservative and liberal regimes, the twin tactics of state social control more accurately correspond to the changing needs and pressures arising from the need to manage unstable markets for maximum capital accumulation. In other words, if flexibility, openness and tolerance, were the watchwords of art, science and industry, especially immediately following the end of the Cold War, then the new maxims of the homeland security state apparatus are restraint, insularity, and suspicion.[43]

Conclusion

In this sense the seemingly post-rational, political agenda of the Bush Doctrine might be a refreezing of selected portions of the de-territorialized network that Hardt and Negri posited in their influential study, *Empire*. Likewise, the investigation and intimidation of journalists, scientists, academics and artists may be more than just a public scapegoating of relatively powerless individuals and groups. It might instead be aimed at loudly signaling an end to the interdisciplinary, transnational entrepreneurialism that dominated the pre-9/11 technological, economic, and cultural environment.[44]

That is not to say that capitalism will never again chant the mantra of 90s management guru Tom Peters, "Never hire anyone without an aberration in their background."[45] Nor will it, at the mere invocation of anti-authoritarian ideas, react as it has in the CAE case, at least not based on the facts thus far. Instead, what sets this moment apart is the re-sanctification of the state as transcendent fetish and a concomitant re-disciplining of ambiguous, unmanageable forms. This includes CAE. When CAE transformed various insurgent theories – be these avant-gardist or radical-corporate – into accessible, DIY procedures, and then directed a diffuse, yet unquestionably resistant force towards select, private and governmental targets, it publicly demonstrated its ability to operate

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[39] Quoted by John Dunn in "Designing a business revolution," *Georgia Tech Magazine* Vol. 76 No. 2, Fall 1999 gtalumni.org/Publications/magazine/fall99/west.html

[40] Matthew Jesse Jackson, "Managing the avant-ga *New Left Review* 32 March – April 2005 p. 114

[41] Taking this one large step further, the networked operatives of the financial world who covertly seek exploit or bankrupt other corporations and even na are veritable encyclopedias of tactical methodology. Indeed, one might even compare them to Al Queda agents if not for the premium they place on self preservation. A good example is John Parkins, who "declares his guilt" in *Confessions of an Economic Man*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers, San Francisco, 2004

[42] President Clinton's former Undersecretary of Com for International Trade, Jeffrey E. Garten, has wa that the new nationalism will lead to "escalating tensions between the U.S. and Europe over export subsidies, steel, agriculture, genetically modified fodo, and privacy regulations." In "The politics of fortune: a new agenda for business leaders," on the website of American Economic Alert at < americaneconomicalert.org/view_art.asp?Prod_ID=862>

[43] Ironically, it is the liberal press that appears to be calling for a return to the cultural politics of the War years. In a *New York Times* Op-Ed piece from August, 2004, the "liberal" paper implored the State Department to "find new public and private partners help it shape a coherent cultural policy and construct broader and more open system to select and fina artists for international exhibitions. Those artists are of the best ways of letting the world know that freedom and excellence matter in this country." p. 14, column 1

[44] Undoubtedly creativity and innovation will remain however to the weapons, security, and surveillance industries, especially.

[45] Tom Peters, quoted by Stefan Stern in "A guru aims high on Prozac," <www.work911.com/cgi-bin/links/ jump.cgi?ID=4166>

Four Horsemen Apocalypse Crusade
Four Horsemen Apocalypse Crusade
Four Horsemen Apocalypse Crusade
Four Horsemen Apocalypse Crusade

within the same nebulous terrain of power that the state now deems its privileged concession to own, lend out, or direct. Is it any wonder authorities compare CAE to terrorists? Kurtz and his colleagues sinned yet a second time and really brought down "the man" when they published manuals explicating how to make use of this counter-knowledge, including its tactics and circuitry, and did so not with the ambiguous idioms of art-speak, but rather with the determined hyper-clarity of the techno-geek.

This is where something far more grotesque than a simple return to the past begins to be teased out of an otherwise incomprehensible instance of state censorship. It is a warning aimed as much at the avant-garde, entrepreneurial spirit of the dot-comers as it is against a group of interdisciplinary artists who refuse to stay in their assigned role as isolated cultural workers. Yet if the buzzword of bunker America is "get back in your box!" there must be no equivocation regarding support for those being targeted by the new "homeland security" state apparatus. To speak up against its creeping authoritarianism, to do so loudly wherever we are, whenever we have the opportunity, in large or small ways, means never acting alone, but instead acting collectively. To not act, as Bertolt Brecht precisely summarizes, is to accept the ignominious verdict of history: "They won't say: the times were dark. Rather: why were their poets silent?"[46]

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[46] *In dark times, 1936-1938*, in *Bertolt Brecht Poems, 1913-1956*, eds. J. Willett and R. Manheim with E. Fried, Methen Books, New York, Toronto, London, Sydney, 1976, p. 274.

140-149

International Markets of Flesh: Mapping Flows of Human Organs and Tissues

subRosa

¿Que Valor Tiene Su Carne?

Averigue como usted puede participar en el Nuevo Mercado Global de la Carne Humana que tráfica con la faena de trabajo, cuerpos y órganos. ¡Este Mercado fue hecho posible gracias a las nuevas tecnologías bio-médicas y genéticas- incluyendo la reprodución assistada y transplante de órganos- y a las tecnologias de la comunicación digital!

Perfil del Sujeto del Bio-Poder

Nombre:

Ciudád/Pueblo/Aldea/Otro: País:

Correo Electrónico: Año de Nacimiento:

Sexo: ☐ Feminina ☐ Masculino ☐ Otro

Raza: ☐ Blanco ☐ Negro ☐ Hispano ☐ Asiático ☐ Mestiza/Multi-racial ☐ Otro

Grupo Sanguineo: ☐ O ☐ A ☐ B ☐ AB ☐ No sé   Estado de Salud: ☐ Bueno ☐ Razonable ☐ Malo

Existe en su familia alguna historia de enfermedades hereditarias ☐ Si ☐ No ☐ No sé

Yo tengo un defectuoso/enfermo (marque todos que aplican). ☐ Riñón ☐ Pulmón ☐ Hígado ☐ Corazón ☐ Páncreas ☐ Córnea ☐ Piel ☐ Médula espinal

Yo soy: ☐ Documentado ☐ Indocumentado   Tipo de trabajo: ☐ Manual ☐ de Servicio ☐ de Conocimiento/Intellectual

Mi trabajo envolve cruzar las fronteras nacionales: ☐ Regularmente ☐ Ocasionalmente ☐ Muy Raramente ☐ Nunca

Salario anuál (en USA dólares): $

Valor de los Partes del Vendedor en el Mercado de la Carne Humana

Este es el valor aproximado en el mercado libre de sus MBH (Materiales Biológicos Humanos) y faena de trabajo. ¡Que tiene usted para vender!

1. Algunos creen que el valor de un órgano o de los MBH (Materiales Biológicos Humanos) debería estar basado en las ganancias perdidas durante el tiempo de recuperación total luego de una operación de transplante- tiempo estimado de 3 meses. Calcule el valor de sus ganancias no recibidas en un plazo de 12 semanas· $

2. ¿Cuáles Materiales Biológicos Humanos le gustaria poner a disposición? (en USA dolares)

2a. **Productos de la Sangre y del Plasma** (renovable) **$200** /mensual x ________meses =________________ 2a $

2b. **Productos de Gameto** 2b $

☐ Semen (renovable) ☐ Europeo/Judio/Asiático **$100** ☐ Otro **$20**

☐ Ovulos (no renovable) ☐ Super modelo **$150,000** ☐ Europeo/Judio/Asiático **$5,000** ☐ Rubia-ojos azules-con titulo universitario **$50,000** ☐ Otra **$1,000**

2c. **Órganos Sólidos**

La venta de órganos humanos es ilegal en la mayoría de paises Aun hay un mercado "informal" en el comercio de cadáveres y órganos humanos frescos obtenidos ilegalmente. Muchos paises están considerando ahora la posibilidad de legalizar alguna forma de compensación para los donadores de órganos Las siguientes tres columnas en el diagrama a continuación le darán algunas opciones

Órgano*	USA Contrato por Adelante	Fuera de USA	Diga su Precio
☐ Riñón	**$5,000**	**$1,000-3,000*** Donacion Viva	($,)
☐ Páncreas	**$5,000**	**$1,000-3,000***	($,)
☐ Hígado	**$5,000**	**$1,000-3,000*** Injerto Vivo	($,)
☐ Corazón/Pulmón	**$5,000**	**$2,000***	($,)
☐ Córneas	**$500–1,000/par***	**$500–1,000/par***	($,)
* Los precios varian de país a país.		**SUBTOTAL:** (pónga en linea 2c)	

2c $

2d. **Trabajo** 2d. $

☐ Yo necesito comprar faena de trabajo _______ horas **x** ($, /hora) = ________________

Tipo de trabajo que quiere vender: ☐ Manual ☐ Servicio ☐ de Conocimiento o Intelectual

☐ Madre de Vientre (rentár el utero) **$10,000** por un período de 9 meses

Sumar lineas 2a–2d y entre aqui

EL VALOR TOTAL DE SU CARNE $

subRosa 2003

Introduction

subRosa's collective art practice strives to create discourse and embodied knowledge about the effects of information-, communication-, and bio-technologies on women's lives labor, and bodies Since 1998, we have produced performances, installations, publications, web sites participatory mapping events and workshops addressing these effects subRosa's projects aim to re-think and re-contextualize historical feminist theories regarding the representation and treatment of women's bodies, sexuality, production and reproduction as they are being inflected and changed by global biopolitical shifts to a service immaterial labor, and affect economy by migration and by advanced bio-medical and genetic technologies There is no question that worldwide women s bodies––along with soldier migrant, raced, and worker bodies––are under more stringent surveillance now than ever before, and that the power of militarized imaging, surveillance, private property rights and other control mechanisms are deeply affecting women's lives in specific ways subRosa seeks to understand the implications of increased controls while mapping new possibilities for feminist praxis regarding women's sexual, social, and reproductive autonomy, and acknowledging the "constant capture" of agency that these new conditions of surveillance generate

Many of subRosa s projects address issues raised during the 2006 University of Milwaukee conference *Constant Capture Visibility Civil Liberties and Global Security* For example we ve been particularly concerned with the literal capture of women s bodies and tissues in the service of "scientific" control of fertility and reproduction in ART (Assisted Reproductive Technologies) and "making" new life in the biology lab We are deeply disturbed by the militarization of medicine and biotechnology as evidenced by the stepped-up spending on developing bio-warfare and bio-safety labs and programs throughout the US [1] subRosa's *SmartMom* WEB project (1998) *detourned* some of the imaging and sensing technologies developed by the military and NASA's space programs, which have subsequently been deployed for civilian purposes [2] A classic example is ultrasound imaging initially developed by the navy to detect underwater submarines and other large objects, and now a staple gynecological tool used to monitor conception, pregnancy, ovulation, ovarian cysts and the like In our research we found many examples of Defense Sciences Office (DSO) and Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) projects that purpose to biologically and chemically retool the soldier body for remote battlefield conditions For example, DSO is "developing technologies that will allow our highly skilled and impeccably trained war-fighters to maintain their peak physical and cognitive performance despite the harsh conditions of combat such as sleep deprivation, intake of inadequate quantity/quality of calories heat and cold stress, muscle fatigue," as well as possible exposure to germs and viruses of bio-warfare and infectious diseases [3] Devices and procedures already in development or combat deployment include experimental vaccines, molecular pharmaceuticals, automated battle-field "trauma pods," novel pain medications, and a "neural-controlled upper extremity prosthesis that fully recapitulates the motor and sensory functions of a natural limb " The ironic *SmartMom* project suggested in what ways many of these cyborgian technologies could be adapted to valuable civilian uses such as controlling women's fertility, forcing their compliance with doctor s orders and assuring more efficient reproduction of workers and soldiers

International Fleshmarkets

World-wide the trafficking of humans—overwhelmingly women and children–for sex work the entertainment industry, domestic and slave labor, is one of the fastest growing (illegal) industries in the world [4] subRosa has researched and made work about the harvesting and international distribution of women's tissues and body parts, such as eggs, placentas, embryos embryonic and fetal stem cells and umbilical cord blood [5] When we were invited to international performance festivals in Mexico City (2003)[6] and in Merida Mexico (2005),[7] we devised *International Markets of Flesh (IMF)* a project that incorporates a critique of the ravages that NAFTA (the North American Fair Trade Agreement) has wreaked on the Mexican economy and labor conditions—not to mention on human and civil rights Both performances were presented bilingually in Spanish and English *IMF* addressed the increase in entrepreneurial international trafficking of human organs and transplant operations facilitated through the Internet, global communications technologies, enforced or voluntary migration patterns, and the gendered aspects of citizenship and legal status (for example the 'property rights of husbands over their wives' body parts and reproductive capacity in some countries) From our research and audience response it was clear that the trafficking of organs and bodies for medical labor and sex purposes was already a hot-button political issue in Mexico

IMF was conceived as a low-tech audience-participatory performance designed to inspire critical thinking about relationships between new eugenic reproductive technologies digital communications technologies, and an international flesh market that trafficks in human labor, bodies and organs. How do these new communications and bio- technologies affect social and political relations between individual bodies in everyday life? How are the global market conditions of pan-capitalism reconfiguring international labor relations and flows of bodies and body parts across borders? How are concepts of the value of human life changing in the age of the genetically engineered, distributed and patented body? What possibilities of resistance to market imperatives are possible in the tactical deployment of our collective bio-political power?

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[1] See the Sunshine Project <www sunshine-project org>

[2] See subRosa website for SmartMom link <www cyberfeminism net>

[3] For DOS and DARPA projects see <http //www darpa mil/dso/biosci/biosci htm>

[4] As reported on Worldview Chicago Public Radio August 28 2006 Recent European Commission figures for yearly trafficking figures for women estimate 700 000 in the last year See also "Running with Atalanta" a Radio Netherlands documentary on sex trafficking in the Netherlands

[5] See for example subRosa s project "Cell Track Mapping the Appropriation of Life Materials " <www cyberfeminism net>

[6] *International Markets of Flesh* "XI International Performance Art Festival Out of Focus" ExTeresa Arte Actual Mexico City July 11 2003

[7] *International Markets of Flesh v2* in collaboration with Carolina Loyola-Garcia ÐArte Nuevo InteractivAÐ05 Ð Patio Central del Centro Cultural Olimpio Mérida Mexico June 25, 2005 (catalog)

Our goals for the performance were

- Collective research and knowledge production
- Hands-on learning/teaching about international fleshmarkets while discussing their social, economic and geographic implications
- Experiencing science with a difference the understanding of science and its contents are different when it is done in the public sphere as an interrogative act
- Public pedagogy as a practice of resistance to intellectual property agreements, privatization and corporatization of learning and knowledge
- DIY (do it yourself) tactics. How to arouse the interest and passion of viewers and users through projects that address key everyday life issues such as food and nutrition, health and medical care, reproduction and fertility, and work and money
- Exploring the interrelationships between human desires, myths, real scientific possibilities, and the ways in which different lives are valued

We designed *IMF* as a collective mapping and information-sharing project. The audience/participants gathered in the center of a performance space that contained a large map, a digital projection, and a set of transparent anatomical drawings of the solid human organs.[8] There were trays of soft sculptures very close in size and weight to actual human organs, and piles of colored stickers of the most commonly harvested body parts. To begin the performance, we first passed the soft organ sculptures around among the audience in order to let them feel the weight and size of the organs. We suggested holding them against their bodies in the locations indicated in our anatomical diagrams. This embodied performative moment evoked a lively interchange and our audience was reluctant to let go of the organs (we even lost a few hearts in this performance)

Next followed a slide show discussing various economies of international body part trafficking. Whole migrant worker bodies as well as illegally sold "donor" body parts tend to move from South to North, and from East to West. Clients and organ brokers are usually wealthy individuals living in First World countries, while sellers are often desperately poor people from developing countries.[9] Entrepreneurial brokers use the Internet and free market principles to circumvent the (supposedly) strictly regulated organ transplant waiting lists. Advanced life-saving technologies mean more opportunities to improve or extend the lives of terminally ill patients who far outnumber available organ donors. Regulated waiting lists are supposed to prioritize recipients according to need and tissue compatibility, while taking into consideration the social values of who most deserves to stay alive or to live in less pain. But the fact that the demand far outpaces the supply creates an "organ shortage," which is easily overcome by individuals who can broker deals between the extremely wealthy and extremely poor in illegal international black markets.[10] subRosa's slide-show illustrated how international illegal transactions work with a true story about an illegal brokerage firm based in Israel that arranged for an impoverished Brazilian to sell a single kidney to a wealthy New Yorker who was thus able to bypass a long transplant waiting list- To skirt US regulations, the surgery was performed in Johannesburg, South Africa, which has long been a center of advanced techniques in transplant surgery

These preliminary sections were a preparation for the main activity of the performance, which was to map participants' stories and rumors about the trafficking, sale, and transplant of organs onto a large world map we had prepared. The map was printed with a version of Buckminster Fuller's Dymaxion Projection, which shows the South and North American continents in reversed positions (so that South America is on top) and also depicts the continents' relative sizes more accurately than conventional maps. To the right on our map was a large human/cyborgian anatomical figure, a recombinant of both fleshly and machinic body parts. We encouraged participants to draw and write their stories directly on the map, tracking the countries and routes by which the organs/bodies had traveled, and using stickers to designate the organ in question as well as relating it to the cyborg body on the map. Myths, rumors, and factual examples were all juxtaposed and it was interesting to see that the geographies overlapped

People were reluctant at first, but then eager to tell their stories of the flesh market. They understood intuitively that it was both real and metaphorical and that the economic relations between Mexico and the US are cannibalistic (though a surprising number of audience members in Mexico City did not know what NAFTA was and were unaware of the International Monetary Fund, to which the show's title refers). subRosa members and the audience contributed tales of babies being stolen from

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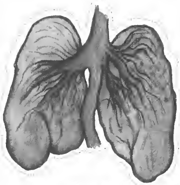
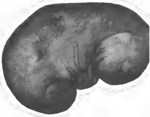
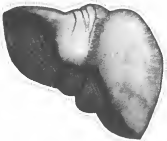
[8] In Mexico City we performed on the altar of a converted 17th Century Spanish chapel in the center of the city. In Merida we performed in the open-air rotunda of a cultural building. The venues attracted very different audiences and in both cases presented a mix of locals of all classes, tourists, street vendors, and multilingual art aficionados

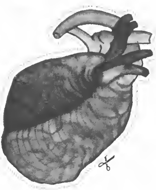
[9] "Donor" is a euphemism. Despite the fact that all countries have laws forbidding the selling of human organs, tissues, and cadavers, all parts of the human body can now fetch huge prices on illegal markets. A fresh (non-cadaveric) kidney bought from an impoverished seller for $2,000 can be sold to a well-off client/patient for $20,000. Brokers and scientists readily employ the rhetoric of donation but rarely give unpaid time, space, or their own body parts to the exchange

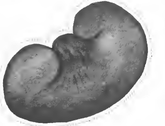
[10] See Nancy Scheper-Hughes "Dispelling the Myth. The realities of organ trafficking." <www.threemonkeysonline.com/threemon_article_organ_trafficking_interview_nancy_scheper-Hughes.htm>

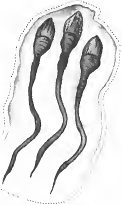


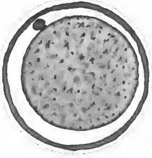


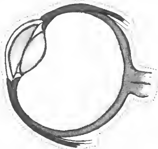






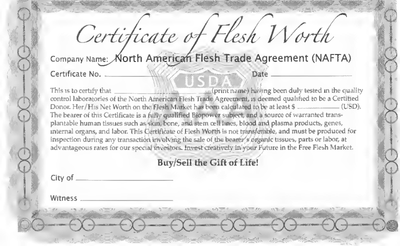






mothers in hospitals, street children being drugged and harvested for their organs, blood being drawn from homeless donors in return for food; kidneys, corneas and livers being sold to Internet buyers to pay for an ill mother's treament a daughter's marriage a son's schooling, and a family home, as well as stories about relatives or friends who had received organ transplants with mixed medical results

For a final performance activity we asked people to fill out a " What is your Flesh Worth?" (*Que Valor Tiene Su Carne?*) questionnaire in return for which they receive a Certificate of Flesh Worth with the following text



Certificate of Flesh Worth

Company Name: North American Flesh Trade Agreement (NAFTA)

Certificate No. ______________ Date ______________

This is to certify that ______________(print name) having been duly tested in the quality control laboratories of the North American Flesh Trade Agreement, is deemed qualified to be a Certified Donor. Her/His Net Worth on the Flesh Market has been calculated to be at least $ ______________ (USD). The bearer of this Certificate is a fully qualified Biopower subject, and a source of warranted transplantable human tissues such as skin, bone, and stem cell lines, blood and plasma products, genes, internal organs, and labor. This Certificate of Flesh Worth is not transferable, and must be produced for inspection during any transaction involving the sale of the bearer's organic tissues, parts or labor, at advantageous rates for our special investors. Invest creatively in your Future in the Free Flesh Market.

Buy/Sell the Gift of Life!

City of ______________

Witness ______________

The Flesh Worth Form used documented market values for body parts and labor and was an effective way to demonstrate how those values are often arbitrarily higher or lower according to the race age, and gender of the donor During the Mexico City performance subRosa discovered that many in our audience did not respond well to filing out a questionnaire They were suspicious of this activity (probably for very good reasons) and several left at that point. Others were eager to get the Certificate but were practically illiterate so we had to help them fill out the questionnaires This proved to be an interesting part of the performance as it meant having discussions with people about how to put a monetary value on a kidney, or liver or cornea, or other body part The thought of selling a body part was abhorrent to most people, many of whom either estimated the value of their parts very highly, or declared them invaluable and sacred, saying they would only consider an organ donation as a humanitarian act not a monetary transaction

When subRosa re-did this performance a year later in Merida, a city in the Yucatan, we changed the last part of the performance Instead of filling out questionnaires, we asked people to write down on cards responses to problems of inequality inherent in the flesh market, and to suggest more equitable ways of dealing with health care migration, and labor issues In return for their ideas, we traded them "Biocommons Bonds" from the Central World Bank (Banco Central Del Mundo) The bio-commons mentioned on the bonds were inspired by the 2002 Porto Alegre World Forum "Draft Treaty to Share The Genetic Commons ' [11] We found that the approach of collectively trying to think things differently generated excitement, laughter, conversation and some wacky suggestions as well as sincere attempts to address the painful issues of economic and political inequality and bodily violence.

Conclusion Human (and animal) bodies have been the most valuable commodity since human culture and primitive accumulation began It seems that in late capitalism, bodies have also become the primary sites of sovereignty, resistance, and contestation This is particularly true for women who comprise the largest share of migrants and trafficked persons world-wide As Sylvia Federici writes in *Caliban and the Witch Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation,* the body has been for women in capitalist society what the factory has been for male waged workers the primary ground of their exploitation and resistance, as the female body has been appropriated by the state and men, and forced to function as a means for the reproduction and accumulation of labor '[12] subRosa is concerned to make art about science and health care questions that is informed, engaging, yet critical and gives audiences both theoretical and practical tools and ideas for creating discourse, resistance and perhaps even activism Merely using digital technologies or biotechnology processes in art practice does not automatically make the artwork critical or socio/politically engaged On the contrary, it can serve to celebrate and advertise novel medical "life-saving" technologies and scientific "miracle" interventions that are often questionable experimental, expensive, and unnecessary, and also have very high failure rates subRosa s projects aim to create critical discourse and knowledge production in the public sphere As well, we want to draw attention to the constant surveillance and control in people s everyday lives and in the socio-cultural sphere Our experience shows that even a brief encounter with hands-on practices and scientific information through pedagogical art projects can suggest to audiences new ways of addressing key social and political issues, such as the modification of soldier bodies for military service scientific (eugenic) control of reproduction, and the commodification and trafficking of organs and body parts Clearly, it is time to call for the de-militarization (and de-corporatization) of the medical and pharmaceutical industries, as well as the bio-sciences—including genetic engineering and stem cell technologies It is time to re-capture and rekindle the public will and passion for justice that led to the formation of such "people s medicine" organizations as the Feminist Health Movement, ACT-UP, and TAC (Treatment Action Coalition) Like them, we must muster common resources to create democratic knowledge-in-common, self-help, and mutual assistance in the public sphere [13]

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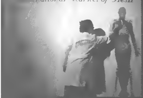
[11] "Porto Alegre Treaty Initiative to Share the Genetic Commons, 2002 <www tradeobservatory org>

[12] Silvia Federici *Caliban and the Witch Women the Body and Primitive Accumulation,* (New York Autonomedia 2004) p 16

[13] For an account of ACT-Ups tactical campaigns and recent AIDS medication activism by TAC see Gregg Bordowitz *The AIDS Crisis is Ridiculous and Other Writings 1986-2003* (Cambridge and London MIT Press 2004)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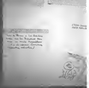
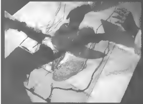
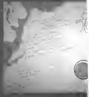




International Market of Flesh



Markets of Flesh

rnational Market of Flesh

ernational Market of Flesh

Free Canibalism Agreement.
Third World countries are herewith authorized to freely cannibalize countries that have systematically despoiled then through colonization

Bon Appetit

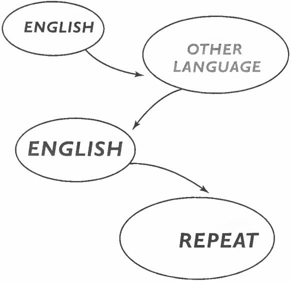
150-155

Extro

152-155

A SERIAL TRANSLATION

(Article 19 processed serially through web translation services, resulting in change of noise to signal)


ENGLISH
OTHER LANGUAGE
ENGLISH
REPEAT

Conceived by Lane Hall

EVERYONE HAS
THE RIGHT TO
FREEDOM OF
OPINION AND
EXPRESSION; THIS
RIGHT INCLUDES
FREEDOM TO HOLD
OPINIONS
WITHOUT
INTERFERENCE
AND TO SEEK,
RECEIVE AND
IMPART
INFORMATION AND
IDEAS THROUGH
ANY MEDIA AND
REGARDLESS OF
FRONTIERS.

SPANISH

"Each one has the right to the freedom of the opinion and the expression; this right includes the freedom to carry out opinions without interference and to look for, to receive and to distribute the information and ideas with any means and without concerning borders."

PORTUGUESE

"Each has the right to the freedom of the opinion and the expression; this right includes freedom to carry through opinions without interference and to look, to receive and to distribute the information and the ideas with all the ways and without concerning sides."

GERMAN

"Everyone has the right for the liberty of the opinion and the expression; this right closes liberty, in order to carry by opinions without disturbance and to look the information and the ideas with all ways to receive and distribute and without edges to concern."

RUSSIAN

"Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; it closes freedom, in order to be considered without interference and to see information and without the province for concerns."

FRENCH

"Each one is entitled to the freedom of thought and expression; it encloses freedom, in order to be outwards considered interference and to see the information and of the ideas in all manners of receiving and of disseminating and without the province for the interest."

JAPANESE

"Each one can give of thought and expression this qualification freely; as for that in order freedom, the interference and thought of all methods is surrounded because it is considered outside of the thing which is received spreading and to see information and the thought without a having of the area of interest."

ARABIC

"Each one can give of thought and freedom of expression clause. This is freedom, intervention and thought of all the roads around it are from the outside which received information dissemination and the ideas without the presence of the area of interest."

CHINESE

"Give a thought and expression provisions. This is free-thinking intervention and all roads around the dissemination of information are received from outside some independent supervision and therefore is of no interest."

notes on contributors

Jasmina Alinder is Assistant Professor of History at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and teaches classes in visual culture and public history. She received her Ph.D. in Art History from the University of Michigan, specializing in the history of photography. She is completing a book manuscript on photography and Japanese American incarceration during World War II and working on a documentary film about Milwaukee socialism.

A. Aneesh is Assistant Professor of Sociology and Global Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. He is the author of *Virtual Migration: the Programming of Globalization*, which examines how new technologies of globalization effect a break with previous notions of labor migration. Aneesh is currently completing a study of international call centers located in India, a research project funded by the MacArthur Foundation's Program in Global Security and Sustainability.

Marin Blažević is Assistant Professor in the Department of Dramaturgy and Theory at the Academy of Drama Arts at the University of Zagreb in Croatia. He publishes widely on contemporary performance practice. He has co-edited several special issues of the performing arts journal *Frakcija*, most recently *Reflections on the Process / Performance: A Reading Companion to Goat Island's "When will the September roses bloom? Last night was only a comedy"* (co-edited with Matthew Goulish) and books – *Branko Gavella: Theory of Acting - from material to personality*, co-edited with Nikola Batušić, *Conversations about New Theatre*.

Sandra Braman is Professor of Communication at UWM. She has been studying the macro-level effects of informational meta-technologies (digital, biological, and nano) for over 20 years. Her most recent of five books is *Change of State: Information, Policy, and Power*, and she is currently doing research on transformations of the legal system to serve technologies rather than people.

The Builders Association is a New York-based performance and media company whose projects use technology to explore the boundaries of theater. Winner of the Obie Award, it often works in collaboration with other groups to produce large-scale cross-media performances. Its work, which has toured the world includes *Jet Lag*, produced in collaboration with the architects Diller+Scofidio, *Alladeen*, produced with the media group motiroti, and *Super Vision*, which was produced with the multidisciplinary collective dbox. In 2004, The Builders Association is currently working on *Continuous City*, a new project exploring the dislocation that accompanies the rise of "networked selves."

Ruxandra Cesereanu is an acclaimed poet, novelist, and scholar. She teaches at Babes-Bolyai University in Cluj, where she is an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Letters and a founder of Phantasma: the Center for Imagination Studies. Her poetry collections include *Live Zone*, *Fall Over the City*, and *Venice with Violet Veins*, while her fiction includes *Voyage through the Looking-Glasses* and *Tricephalos*. She is the author of *Journey to the Center of Hell: The Gulag in the Romanian Conscience*, a study of Romanian political prisons, as well as *Panopticon*, a major essay on political torture in the 20th century.

James Der Derian is Research Professor of International Studies at Brown University, where he directs the Global Security Program, the Global Media Project and the Information Technology, War, and Peace Project at the Watson Institute for International Studies. His most recent book is *Virtuous War: Mapping the Military-Industrial-Media-Entertainment Network* (2001). He is also the producer of two documentaries, *VirtualY2K* (2000) and *After 9/11* (2004).

Hasan Elahi is an interdisciplinary artist who has presented work at The Hermitage, the Venice Biennale, the Georges Pompidou Center and the Kulturbahnhof in Kassel, Germany. His work focuses on such issues as surveillance, simulation, and borders and frontiers. In 2002, he was detained at a Detroit airport and interviewed by the FBI about his frequent travel, an experience he uses as the basis of *Tracking Transience*, a project that tracks his movements and actions. He has received numerous grants and sponsorships from such groups as Ford Foundation/Philip Morris and the Creative Capital Foundation. He teaches at Rutgers University.

Lane Hall is Professor of English at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. His books, prints and installations have been widely exhibited in the United States and Europe. Recent projects include installations at the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco, Post Gallery in Los Angeles, Monique Meloche Gallery in Chicago and The Milwaukee Art Museum. He was co-curator of the exhibition Animal Nature at Carnegie Mellon University and is the co-creator of the Criminal Animal website (along with artist Lisa Moline) which serves as a repository for art and research focused on animal study, and which served as the genesis of the Animal Nature exhibition.

Fassih Keiso is a Syrian-born artist who lives and works in Australia. His multimedia art has shown internationally and focuses on Western and Middle-Eastern Islamic perceptions of sexuality and the body. He often uses digital technology to multiply and divide images of the body. His work includes *They Shoot Belly Dancers Don't They?*, *Not Only Skin* and *Skins*.

Caroline Levine is Professor of English at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Her first book, *The Serious Pleasures of Suspense: Victorian Realism and Narrative Doubt* won the Perkins Prize for the best contribution to narrative studies in 2004 A second book, *Why Democracy Needs the Arts*, appeared in 2007 Aside from her work in Victorian studies, she has published articles on contemporary artists, including Richard Serra, Jeff Koons, and Andreas Gursky

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John E McGrath wrote *Loving Big Brother Performance, Privacy and Surveillance Space* (2004) He is Artistic Director of Contact (Manchester, UK), an award winning theatre which produces and presents the best of contemporary performance in a vibrant young and diverse environment Recent directing work includes the cyber-love story *Perfect* by Katie O'Reilly and Paul Clay, Limn Sissy's *Storm and Something Dark* and Jeff Noon's *Somewhere the Shadow* He is a recipient of a Cultural Leadership Award from the National Endowment for Science Technology and the Arts

Jon McKenzie is Visiting Associate Professor of English at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where he teaches courses in performance studies and civil disobedience He is the author of *Perform or Else From Discipline to Performance* (2001), as well as numerous essays, including "Democracy's Performance " "Laune Anderson for Dummies," and "Towards a Sociopoetics of Interface Design etoy, etoys, and TOYWAR," and a broadcast radio commemoration of the 1986 shuttle disaster titled "CINC A Challenger Radio Drama " He is currently working on two projects, a second book, whose working title is *Performance Inc Global Performativity and Mediated Resistance*, and an anthology co-edited with Heike Roms and Wan-ling Wee titled *Contesting Performance Global Genealogies of Research*

Lisa Perks is Associate Professor in the Department of Film and Media Studies at the University of California-Santa Barbara She is the author of *Cultures in Orbit Satellites and the Televisual* (2005) and co-editor of *Planet TV A Global Television Reader* (2003) She is also a collaborator on several media art projects including Experiments in Satellite Media Arts and LOOM, and is a co-investigator in an international research initiative called the Transcultural Geographies Project with colleagues from Holland, Germany Switzerland, Slovenia and Turkey She is currently working on a new book called Mixed Signals Media Technologies and Cultural Geography

Gregory Sholette is a New York City based artist, writer and co-founder of the artist collectives REPOhistory and PAD/D Recent exhibitions include A Knock At The Door at The Cooper Union and a film screening at the Anthology Film Archives His work has appeared at the Museum of Modern Art, Dia Art Foundation, the New Langton Arts, and Exit Art Sholette is co-editor with Nato Thompson of *The Interventionists A Users' Manual for the Creative Disruption of Everyday Life* (2004 & 2005) and *Collectivism After Modernism*, co-edited with Blake Stimson (2006) He teaches classes in critical theory at New York University

subRose is a cyberfeminist cell of cultural researchers using BioArt and tactical performance to explore and critique the intersections of information and biotechnologies in women's bodies, lives, and work
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